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THE MOTLEY BOOK:

A SERIES OF

TALES AND SKETCHES OF

AMERICAN LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BEHEMOTH, A LEGEND OF THE MOUND-BUILDERS," &c.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY DICK, GIMBER, AND OTHERS.

THIRD EDITION—REVISED.

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By Cornelius Mathews.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

An author stands in the portal of a Third Edition, like a prosperous host, smiling a welcome to the public. To have gratified the palate of the readers of former impressions gives him confidence in spreading his table again for another round of customers, and warrants him in the presumption of swinging out a new preface, like a new sign, to catch the eye and inform those who read as they run, that there is entertainment within for man and woman.

To leave metaphor for the plain level of historical narrative, the author must express his deep sense of the flattering manner in which the *Motley Book* has been heretofore regarded by the public. The kindness with which his earliest effort is received, seizes hold on the heart of the young author, and can never be loosened thence or forgotten: it is then that enemies are hardest and friends most doubtful, when his hopes are at best questionable, and when to question his success or his powers is neither slander nor sacrilege. If the little light which he ventures to set up can be blown out, it accomplishes a double end; proving the power of a malicious critic, and furnishing a clearer firmament for such false orbs to twinkle in as he may be pleased to summon into existence. The present author must be considered however as speaking more for the sake of others who may be struggling than for himself, for he has the great satisfaction of adding that praise has been bestowed by the critics of the Motley Book with an open and liberal hand.

In the present edition, the author has amended the work, he believes, by substituting the sketch entitled "Noadiah Bott," in place

of that which formerly opened the volume. Two illustrations are likewise withdrawn, and the two by *Gimber* inserted. It may not be improper to add that the illustrations entitled "The Superanuated Donkey Mail," and "The Secretary reading his Report," and which received flattering commendation from the press, were designed by *William Page*, Esq., of the National Academy of Design, and engraved by Mr. *Dick*.

New-York, October 1, 1839.

THE MOTLEY BOOK.

NOADIAH BOTT;

OR,

ADVENTURES WITH A GOVERNOR AND A WIDOW.

The two most delightful and exciting pursuits an ordinary citizen can be engaged in, in time of peace, are certainly office-seeking and courting a widow—combining as they do the excitement of bloodshed, and the more animating prospect of quiet and unobstructed plunder.

In the year of our Lord ——, it fell to the portion of Noadiah Bott to embark in this double undertaking, with great advantages of mind and person. He was a little corpulent man, slightly asthmatic, and generally clad in garments about one size too small for his person, which of course gave him very much the appearance of a stuffed penguin promenading for exercise after dinner. Noadiah had derived his knowledge and experience from several professions, for he had been in succession a hardware-merchant, a market-gardener, and a pawn-broker. During his continuance in the first business he had learned a very singular fact in natural history, which gave him a strong prejudice against the traffic in hand-irons and table-knives—namely: that native rats, particularly the species indigenous to New-York, possessed tremendous powers of digestion; for he found they had discovered a passage into his money-drawer, and were in the habit of carrying off, and actually made way with quarter-dollars, half-dollars, six-pences, and sometimes were even so famished as to fasten on husky, dry bank-bills, and counterfeit coppers and five-cent pieces. At least this was the explanation given by an ingenuous clerk, and so he broke up his establishment.

Reserving a few spades, rakes and coulters from the general sale of his goods, he made his next experiment with a small garden in the suburbs, from which he proposed to raise vegetables for the supply of the city market. Never was such a season known as the one in which Noadiah Bott undertook the management of four acres of kitchen esculents. Tornadoes rushed down from the North and played the devil

with his apple and plum-trees; scorching, dry zephyrs came sighing and stealing from the South and wilted his asparagus and cabbage. What the tornadoes failed to blow away and the freshets to wash away, was nothing but a heap of dry sand which would have been very well in the centre of the Arabian Desert, but was rather out of place in a kitchen-garden under actual cultivation. Then he had a left-handed mule, that kept turning the wrong way in the furrow, and who made himself so impracticable and disagreeable that Bott thought he might as well introduce the hippopotamus as a plough-horse at once, and sow his four acres with trade-winds and hurricanes. Beside all this, every thing noxious and pestiferous and destructive was put down in the almanacs for this year. First came an army of locusts, which took quarters on the neighbouring trees and fences, and after electrifying Bott for two nights and a day with their pleasant martial music, made an onset, and left his garden so stript of leaf, twig and every green thing, that it looked like a ship with its sails tattered into ribbons by a stiff nor'wester. Directly upon the track of this greedy swarm came a mad dog, that one half the population of the city thought proper, for the sake of their own exercise and the conservation of the public health, to hunt with great racket and outcry through Bott's garden into a neighbouring pond, where the poor animal ended his troubles by committing suicide. Then there were ground moles, and midnight thieves, and the green-worm, and—the Lord knows what else. Poor Bott was almost distracted, and resolved to quit market gardening, for life, and return to town with what small capital remained, and invest it in 'dead stock,' for as to vegetables, he said "he had no faith in 'em, either as medicine or a means of living."

Abandoning his lease and making up a wagon-load with old ploughshares, harness, hoes, rakes and a second-hand bureau, he started for town, and with this miscellaneous stock of trumpery opened a pawnbroker's shop. He was now entirely out of his element, for he had been in the habit of carrying about under his jacket a little piece of curious mechanism which was infinitely more in his way in his present line of business than an idle partner, a bad season, or a dishonest clerk. What could poor Bott do? Dilapidated old men, who had been in the Revolutionary war, *would* come to his shop to pledge the very musket that had figured at Yorktown, and the very sword that had cut off the head of a Hessian at Trenton, and how could he refuse to add this to his collection of venerable relics and just loan a few shillings to the poor old veteran! And then the widow of a sailor that was with Decatur off Algiers, hadn't seen a loaf of bread for the past fortnight, and all she asked was to be saved from starving by a small advance on a model man-of-

war that her dear Jack had built when he was at home the last, last time. Every cloak that was left in pledge with him—every rusty beaver; every baby's cap, and every pair of plated candlesticks, had some little pathetic history connected with it that would have gone to the heart of a stone. So that, after being in business about nine months, Mr. Noadiah Bott had as pretty a collection of good-for-nothing rubbish as an auctioneer could wish to stand over in the dog-days. In fact his shop was a perfect limbo, haunted by the ghosts of cracked fiddles, feeble flutes, disbanded earthen jars, and wine bottles with holes in their bottoms. With a few old wine flasks, a curious lizard in a vial, and two or three stout benches, and a train of out-of-the-way utensils clattering at his heels, Noadiah, like a conqueror from a ravaged territory, marched out of the sterile region of pawnbroking into a more promising field of labor.

He was, therefore, at present, the proprietor of a political tavern, consisting of a bar and fixtures down stairs, and a room, twenty-five by twelve and a half, in a second story, where meetings were held for the purpose of settling the politics of the ward. It was the business of Bott to light up this apartment once or twice a week; to arrange the platform for a speaker; and on extraordinary occasions to embellish it with a wooden eagle perched on a staff or a banner stretched over an entire side of the room. Sometimes, in the absence of the regular speaker, Bott had been known to mount the platform himself and puff away at a speech of considerable length and power. Besides these regular duties, he was expected to get an audience together, and if it fell short, to treat loafers enough till the room was tolerably crowded; to get up all extraordinary rounds of applause, and, finally, to preside over the crackers and beer which are frequently furnished to the democracy at the close of an exciting and thirsty debate. It was a very entertaining spectacle to see Bott on a night of meeting, bustling up and down stairs, now at the bar and now at the ear of some leading politician, commenting on the news from Ohio or North Carolina, or discussing the effects of the new law regulating the size of pint-pots on the habits of sailors, or some other abstruse and recondite topic. When the business of the meeting had commenced, you might see him every now and then rushing up from the bar-room and thrusting his corpulent little body in at the mouth of the door with considerable effort and puissance, as if to ascertain whether the audience was well packed or not.

Bott had kept these quarters for several years. In that time he had grown stout and rubicund and had formed a large circle of political acquaintance. By dint of listening at the key-holes when com-

mittees and juntos were in session at his house, and by looking grave whenever trifles were discussed, he at length attained such importance in the political world as to venture to invite the Honorable the Corporation of the city to visit, in a body, a remarkable tortoise that had been discovered in his yard, where it had lived twenty-three weeks under a stone without a particle of food. They accordingly came, headed by his Honor the Mayor, and when there, Bott gravely asserted before the assembled magistracy of the city, that this identical tortoise had been recently heard, at midnight, when not a soul nor a sound was stirring in the neighborhood, to cry "Bah!" very distinctly, which (Bott whispered to an Alderman, a particular friend of his) certainly portended the disolution of the Union and the rise of bread-stuffs!

Strengthened by the popularity he deservedly acquired by this bold and sagacious movement, Bott determined to apply to the Governor for a small office. It was some time before he could fix upon one which was suited in all respects to his habits. He had a list of all the offices in the State, from Governor itself down to licensed master-sweep, with the salaries or perquisites annexed; and at length he concluded to take the humble station of inspector of staves—twelve hundred a year. He was getting too corpulent and this out-door business would bring him down. Besides, the sea-air would be good for his health, for he thought, and so he intended to represent to his Excellency, that drinking so much beer nightly for the good of the party, had somewhat impaired his constitution. Inspector of staves—that was the office; and he must bustle about, bustle about—and move the very foundations of the island but he would have it.

About this time it was that Bott cast an eye of affection upon a black-eyed little widow, whom he discovered one day by chance, sitting in an upper window over a coffin-ware house into which he had made his way to engage a coffin for one of his customers that had fallen down that morning in his bar-room with his glass in his hand. What was very singular about this case of sudden death was, that the man had infused a third more water in his brandy than he was in the habit of using; so that it was a capital question for discussion, whether he had died of cold water or alcohol. After chaffering a while for the cheapest coffin in the shop, (for Bott buried his own customers, and liked to underbid himself,) Noadiah set about sounding the proprietor as to the black-eyed lady up stairs. He began by expressing a profound anxiety as to the health of the coffin-maker's family, and a deep conviction of the manifold benefits of living over the store.

"His own people," the coffin-maker however informed him, "lived in a different part of the city. His wife was a woman of weak nerves and could'nt bear the sight of a coffin, they reminded her so much of her little Bartemus, that was dead and gone."

"I havn't the pleasure, then," continued Bott, "of knowing the lady with black eyes, that lives above you. I wonder who she is?"

"Not know her!" exclaimed the coffin-maker, "not know the widow Bobbin—the gayest widow in this city! Why, Mr. Bott, if I wasn't a married man, with two small children, I'd soon know who's who and what's what. I'm often surprised at myself that she hasn't driven me from this melancholy business of coffin-making into ladies' hair-dressing or French shoe-making, or some such light and cheerful occupation."

This was enough for Bott. She was unmarried, and just such a gay, joyous soul as he needed to keep his spirits up in these gloomy times. He accordingly went home, buried the poor customer, and made up his mind to marry the widow and obtain the office of inspector of staves forthwith.

Bott, without difficulty, obtained an introduction, through his friend the coffin-maker, to Mrs. Bobbin, the gay widow. He found her to be a sly creature, as full of fun as a snuff-box, and in fact, a woman exactly after his own heart. It is true, she had one child—a boy about thirteen. This was a slight objection, but the widow prevailed upon Bott to remove it by taking the boy under his own charge, and supplying him with food, lodging and clothes, with a few quarters' schooling; for the boy, as the widow cunningly insinuated, had a good deal of his mother in him, and it would be a pity to allow so much natural smartness to run to waste. Things advanced so swimmingly, and Bott managed with so much skill, that before a month was over, he had not only pledged himself to provide for the widow's son, (whom he had by this time discovered enjoyed a tremendous appetite, wore his pantaloons at the rate of about a pair in a fortnight, and was a little fond of tippling,) but had also engaged the pleasure of the widow's company to the Cartmen's Fancy Ball, to be given in a short time. To make the matter still more pleasing, Bott had the satisfaction of meeting at the house of the widow, an agreeable gentleman, whom he was delighted to be introduced to by Mrs. Bobbin as "her uncle Jonas, from Androscoggin." He seemed to have the same pleasant turn as the widow herself, and was constantly employed, when Bott was present, in saying or doing some amusing thing or other. How could Noadiah be otherwise than happy while the current ran so sparkling and clear?

In the mean time, he devoted himself assiduously to his application for the inspection of staves. He had a petition drawn up, setting forth his claims and services; his three years' untiring opposition to the other party; his ardent devotion to his duties as retailer of spirits to his political friends; his zeal in gathering audiences and preparing inflammatory hand-bills, and his declining health, occasioned by these extraordinary labors. With this petition in his hand, he scoured the city; and presenting it firmly, he brought every man to a stand as summarily as if it had been a pocket-pistol instead of a petition. His enthusiasm was considerably quickened when he learned that a competitor was out before him, and had a start of twenty-seven names.

Besides signatures to his petition, Bott rushed hither and thither, obtaining letters recommendatory from every person of note or standing who had the slightest claim of acquaintance with his Excellency, the Governor of the State. Among others, he procured an invaluable and pressing epistle of recommendation from a gentleman who had enjoyed the extreme felicity of beholding the skirts of his Excellency's coat, as he passed through Onondaga County during a violent storm.

The day had at length arrived, the evening of which was to be signalized by the celebration of the Cartmen's Fancy Ball; and Bott was hurrying through his political toils, in order to be in good time to wait on the widow. With this view he was making rapid progress past a certain market on the East River side, when his eye caught a crowd. Now a crowd was a perfect harvest to Bott, and he had scarcely ever plunged into one without bringing out one or two first rate names to his paper. The widow would be impatient, he feared; and though the temptation was great, he determined to hurry by, when he beheld a distinguished functionary, whose name would be an all-important acquisition. He accordingly resolved to run the risk, and make up lost time by additional speed in his after movements.

"Your signature, if you please," cried Bott, pushing boldly through the crowd toward the Coroner, (for it was that officer, preparing to hold an inquest,) whose ruddy countenance was a conspicuous beacon for the office-seeker. As Noadiah rushed forward, the crowd, supposing him to be some near relative of the deceased come to take possession of his chattels and movable funds, parted; and just as he had succeeded in breaking the inner circle, the Coroner stepped aside, and Mr. Noadiah Bott found himself presenting his petition to an upright corpse with a most doleful countenance, and a faded blue handkerchief about its neck.

"Get his name, by all means, Bott," said the Coroner, whose office

after he had held it three months, had somehow or other made him remarkably facetious. "To him, Bott, to him; he can say a good word for you in the next world, though he plays dummy in this."

"The poor gentleman," cried a voice in the crowd, to several of whom Bott seemed known, "has been down drinking your health, Mr. Bott, in salt water, and success to your application."

"Look in the defunct's pockets, Mr. Coroner," urged a second voice; "p'r'aps he's got a petition up for surveyor-general of sharks and codfish."

"More likely," said a third, "a special bill for privilege to bathe in the docks below the lamp district."

"No such thing," retorted the first citizen; "I'll bet he's a quack doctor, been in to try a new pill that he's been inventing to keep water out of the stomach."

"Come, gentlemen," said the Coroner, "the corpse begins to look melancholy. We must have a jury on the poor fellow, whoever he is; and, Mr. Bott, you will make a good foreman, and I've no doubt, if you render a true verdict, provided the poor man can serve you by a good word with the devil, he'll do it with all his heart."

Bott entreated his friend the Coroner to excuse him from service. The Coroner discovered his extreme urgency—was inexorable, and the inquest proceeded. The body was laid at full length on the top of a fish-stall, and the jury took their seats on market benches on each side. With a word or two from the Coroner, they proceeded to examine witnesses as to the manner of death of the gentleman in the faded blue handkerchief. The first that was produced was an old fish-monger, who looked as dry and withered as a salted haddock: "It was about two o'clock, he guessed—it mought be more, or it mought be less, for he recollected there was a little blast of cloud jist over the sun—when what should he see but the dead one there walking melancholy-like up and down the wharf, (as true as he lived,) with a piece of rope and the tail of a dried herring—(herrings was now a shilling the dozen; if the season set in earlier, it mought so be they would be down to nine-pence ha' penny)—sticking, for all the world, out of his coat pocket behind? He guessed at once, and without help, the moment he got sight of the herring and the rope-end, that something was wrong with the poor gentleman's head. He's loose in the attic, thinks I; but how he'll use that rope to any advantage, with this high wind, I can't guess. If he tries a spile, he's sure to be interrupted unpleasantly; and if he goes into the market and gets possession of a hook, why, some butcher or other 'll come next morning and be offended mightily at the liberty he's took.

'What will the poor gentleman do?' says I, almost in convulsions to see how he was put out, as he rambled up and down the wharf, looking one time on the ground, and then gazing up at the mast-heads, and then stopping and taking a melancholy view in a basket at some fresh black-fish just out of the water. This put him in a doleful train; and what does he do next but makes right down to the river all of a sudden, and spoils his herring and rope's-end, and his own dear body, by jumping straight into the tide?"

An idle fellow, a sort of wharf vagabond, was next produced to furnish his evidence as to the mode of death of the deceased. All that he could testify to was, that he differed from the first witness; for that the herring and the rope, according to his best belief, were in different pockets: that the herring was in the right pocket, and the rope's end in the left. This witness was followed by a match-spirit, another river loafer, who was "as sure as veal was dead calf, that the rope's end was in the right pocket and the bit of herring in the left." This brought out his predecessor, and a furious altercation sprang up between the two minute and accurate observers as to the particular depository of the fish and cord. They battled it out for some time without interruption, when, being ordered off by the Coroner, they, in a very gentlemanly spirit, locked arms and marched away together to a neighboring porter-house, there to discuss the question over a pot of pale ale, and, after an hour's enthusiastic debate, to come to the conclusion that they were both right, and that "that old curmudgeon, the fish-monger, had parboiled (perjured) himself."

Bott, all this time, was suffering under the most hideous state of feeling. Time was flying; the sun was down; the widow must, by this, be dressed; she had put on her hat; in a rage she had torn out of the house, and gone to the ball alone! This was the masterly picture that Bott's mind painted for its own amusement, while he sat at the head of the corpse.

All the customary evidence had been examined, and a pretty palpable case of self-drowning was made out; when who should rush forward, to increase his discomfiture, but half a dozen medical worthies, in breathless haste, panting, and covered with sweat? They all eagerly approached the body, felt of it's temples, it's wrists and it's ankles, with the most affectionate tenderness, and unanimously pronounced it—dead! Here was a discovery for the Coroner and jury. The corpse was decided to be a corpse; but as all their names could not appear in the next morning's report, the Coroner allowed a couple

of them to unbutton the jacket of the corpse, put their fingers in it's mouth, and hand their names to his clerk.

Bott was at length allowed to escape, and choosing the most direct route, started for home. He had successfully accomplished several blocks, when he heard a tremendous noise, resembling the approach of a furious army, the bursting of a volcano, or the thunder of a cataract; it was a New York fire engine. With a horrible uproar, dragged forward by a hundred men, and with a tail of boys—black, white and piebald—as long as that of a comet, it rushed on. It neared the place where Bott was hurrying along; it approached a cross-walk that Bott must pass to the opposite side of the street. He undertook to achieve it before the engine came up; but, mistaking his time, he was caught in the current and hurried along. He had got entangled in the rope at the head of the machine, and it was under such head-way that he must go with it, or be trodden under foot and furnish a mournful casualty or melancholy accident for next day's papers. It was a dreadful situation for a gentleman of a rather corpulent habit, and slightly asthmatic! He entreated the foreman to put his trumpet to his mouth and stop the engine; he offered him two shillings if he would do it—a new hat—his watch! It was all in vain; you might as well attempt to arrest the progress of a herd of buffaloes on the prairie; and they swept on—one long block, two, three. At length they came to a square, where there was a large heap of dirt; and chance accomplished what a new beaver hat, a watch, and the amazing sum of twenty-five cents, had failed to do; it arrested the engine; and Bott, with his hair almost on end with fear and anxiety, disengaged himself, and retracing his steps at a hard gallop, reached his own door.

Composing his spirits with one glass, he proceeded to arrange his toilette in another; and at last stood, in full trim, before the widow's door. With trembling hand he knocked, and was answered: She had gone to the ball an hour before, with her uncle Jonas, from Androscoggin. "The devil take uncle Jonas! (and Heaven be thanked it's no worse!)" thought Noadiah; and he speeded to the scene of festivity.

Bott soon arrived at a large room lighted with mould candles; and from a box in the centre of which, where a negro and five white men, like so many captive Troubadours of the feudal time, were imprisoned for the evening, proceeded certain instrumental sounds of a very spirited and melodious character. On the floor thereof he discovered, besides the customary number of well dressed ladies, about one hundred and fifty men, apparently in the enjoyment of robust health, and

endued in cartmen's frocks, every soul of them. This was the Cartmen's Fancy Ball—the fancy of the thing lying entirely in the frocks. After he had somewhat recovered from the dazzling effect of the refulgent mould-candles and the gorgeous apparel of the gentlemen, so that he could look about with tolerable composure, nearly the first object his eye fell upon was—as true as Bott wore a ruffle !—uncle Jonas of Androscoggin, clad also in a cart-frock, and dancing away at a very vigorous rate with the widow. They appeared to be enjoying themselves charmingly; and Noadiah thought he had never seen, in his whole life, a more affectionate uncle or a more delightful niece. He however advanced into the centre of the room, where he was stared at by the frocked gentry as if he had been a Turk in a turban or a Mohawk in his blanket, and accosted the worthy pair.

The widow playfully rebuked him for his tardiness and irregularity, adding, with a sly look at her partner, that "uncle Jonas had been so kind as to drop in and wait upon her, in his absence, with the ticket he (Bott) had left." She added, in a whisper in Bott's ear—"Uncle Jonas is one of the best men living; and to tell you the truth, Bott, it's the remarkable resemblance between yourself and him that made me take such a liking to you."

At this Bott laughed in his sleeve, and uncle Jonas, who somehow or other had overheard the substance of the whisper, roared right out. Bott glanced stealthily at uncle Jonas very often throughout the evening, and satisfied his own mind that he was one of the best looking men it had ever been his happiness to behold.

The Fancy Ball proceeded merrily; and every time the hundred and fifty male dancers jumped up and cut a pigeon's wing, or struck their heels in the air, they made a noise with their cart-frocks like the sails of a whole fleet of merchant ships flapping in the wind. But what astonished Bott most in the career of their proceedings was, that although he was extremely anxious to dance with the widow Bobbin, yet, by some marvellous combination of circumstances, he was deprived of that pleasure through the whole evening; and what was, if possible, still more miraculous, uncle Jonas, by equal good luck, seemed to dance every individual cotillion with that lady. Sometimes he was pleasantly requested by the widow to bring her a lemonade from the saloon; and before he could return, she was engaged, and dancing in high spirits with her respected relative. Then he would be courteously entreated by one of the managers to snuff a chandalier, as his frock was in the way, and he was afraid of a general conflagration if he attempted it. Then a polite invitation would be sent down from the musician's box, requesting Mr. Bott to come up

the ladder and give the orchestra his opinion on the rumble of the drum, and to pronounce whether it was n't a trifle too harsh for the ears of the very genteel company below. In this way the evening glided by, without giving Bott an opportunity to distinguish himself on the floor; till, just as the ball was about to break up, Mrs. Bobbin prevailed upon him to exhibit himself in a sailor's hornpipe, in which, she slyly informed the company, he was a most capital hand. A ring was accordingly formed by the rest of the assembled gentry, and Bott executed a hornpipe in most brilliant and comic style; in fact, his performance was so pregnant with humorous motions of the leg and swayings of the person, that, at the conclusion, a general complimentary laugh was raised for Bott's especial benefit.

Upon the whole, Bott was pleased, and his pleasure was increased by uncle Jonas informing him that he must go another way, and that he (Bott) must see the widow home. Bott readily accepted the agreeable trust, innocently (and like the primeval Adam, before the days of omnibusses and licensed hacks) forgetting the coach hire. A hack was therefore called, and Noadiah and the widow, bidding uncle Jonas good-night, mounted in—the widow giving Bott the back seat and taking the forward one herself, remarking that she preferred riding backwards, she had been in the habit of rowing so much on a pond, when a girl. During their progress through the streets, Bott observed that the widow every now and then looked just over the top of his hat and smiled; but he did n't observe that uncle Jonas was standing up behind the carriage and making numerous pleasant signals and indications (now and then tapping his forehead significantly) to Mrs. Bobbin through the coach window. Having deposited the widow and discharged the hack, (for he preferred to walk home and chew the cud of amorous fancy at leisure,) about three o'clock that morning Noadiah stretched himself to pleasant dreams!

The inspection of staves now engrossed a large portion of the thoughts of the sagacious Bott, and he left no influence unasked and no politician unannoyed, but that he would obtain the office. He was by this time in possession of the autographs of more than fifty important and respectable men, twenty tolerably great men, and twelve actually great men, that expected to be Members of Congress before they yielded the ghost. To strengthen his claim and bring himself more prominently before the party, he resolved to abandon the comparatively private theatre where he had heretofore performed, and exhibit on a larger stage—in a word, he determined to make a speech at Masonic Hall, which bears the same relation to the political

taverns of the wards as a Primate's Cathedral does to the little chapels connected with it. After forming this resolution Noadiah strenuously devoted himself to the perusal of the newspapers and the orations of Patrick Henry as given in the "American Speaker," and to the practice and cultivation of his voice by a strict regimen of table beer and lozenges. In accordance with his design he prepared an elaborate speech, beginning—"Fellow-Citizens: Unaccustomed as I am to public assemblies"—and ending with an ecstatic description of the "blood-stained Genius of Liberty wrapped in a winding-sheet of stripes and stars"—which was a tolerable figure, considering that Bott had no interest in an incorporated cemetery and was not a tailor by trade.

The eventful evening having at length arrived, Bott disposed of an early tea, and ascended to the public room up stairs and locked himself in with a tumbler of brandy and water and a fourth-size tallow candle, having given strict orders to a small boy to cry "Fire!" if any one attempted to interrupt him. He then recited his harangue from beginning to end with great vigor, addressing a group of large barrels that stood in a corner, as his "fellow-citizens," and a small barrel on his right hand, with 'Old Rum' branded on it, as "Mr. Chairman."

The small boy had no occasion to cry 'fire,' and if the non-interruption of Mr. Bott's speech was to be taken as evidence of no conflagration, any company might have insured all the property, as far as his voice could be heard, with perfect safety, and at a very trifling premium. Having gone through his speech to his own perfect satisfaction, and without any symptoms of animation having manifested themselves either in the brandy-keg or the sturdy group of barrels, Mr. Bott descended, endued his stout little person in a rough overcoat with tremendous pearl buttons, and thrusting his manuscript speech in his hind-pocket, sallied forth. It was a clear, moon-light evening. Bott was in capital spirits, and he dropped into a cellar and took a couple of dozen of York-Bank oysters, just to strengthen his voice. He had not gone far, however, (reciting to himself favorite passages from his harangue,) when he was unconsciously followed by a slight youthful figure, which glided cautiously behind him, took a peep into his face, and extending it's right arm, withdrew from the pocket of Bott a white roll which, in all human probability, contained the speech of the evening. The purloiner then stole off, and turning a corner, halted a moment under a lamp, opened the roll, laughed quietly, and then made way for a political club or association of the opposite party to Bott's, and there finding a numerous assembly of

choice spirits gathered, he regaled them with the recitation of the able and eloquent harangue of Noadiah (or Noddy, as the reader took the liberty of calling him,) Bott, Esq., which you may be sure was interrupted with frequent exclamations like these—"Well done, Bott!" "Good, for the inspector of staves!" "Equal to fifth-proof with five-fifths water!"

In the mean time the hilarious and innocent Noadiah was wending joyously toward the scene of his glory, stopping now and then, however, when he was reminded by a hydrant or some other upright and stationary object, of an attentive listener, to get into the shadow of the buildings and recite some striking passage with appropriate extension of arms, contracting of brows and planting of the foot.

An immense crowd had assembled; the meeting was called to order; a Chairman and seventeen Assistant-Chairmen (to help the presiding officer look grave) were appointed, and five or six speakers, ranging from three feet and a half to six feet high, and from twenty years of age to seventy, with every variety of voice from the kettle-drum to the fife, addressed the audience—and Bott listened to them all, sometimes pleased that his own time had not arrived, and sometimes eager to take the platform at once.

At length the cry of "Bott!" "Bott!" was heard rising from different quarters of the room, (for certain vagabond friends of his, there by his special invitation, were on the alert,) and swelling into a perfect tempest of acclamation, Bott came forward, aided in the rear by two or three sturdy scamps, and helped in the van by a couple of the secretaries, who seized him forcibly by the collar and drew him forward.

"Three cheers for Bott!" shouted one of his vagabond friends the moment his nose became visible as he assumed the stand. Three cheers were accordingly given, and Bott began. Through the first half-dozen sentences of his harangue he marched in triumphant style, keeping his eye fixed keenly on a bald-headed man in about the centre of the crowd, to steady his nerves—when suddenly the bald-headed man, prompted by a current of air that came in at a broken pane, clapped on his hat, and Bott stopped short as if he had been struck with the apoplexy. "Go on!" was the universal cry. But Bott had lost his self-possession, and stared around like a frightened rabbit, first at the Chairman, then at each one of the seventeen Assistant-Chairmen, then into the bottom of his hat, and then he thought of his manuscript. A smile gleamed over his face, and he thrust his hand behind him, found nothing, brought it back again, and the sickly smile went out. At last he stammered—"Beer three cents a glass—nutmeg extra—

no trust in this shop"—and he was hurried off the stage by the two benevolent secretaries who had dragged him on by the collar.

Recovering himself from the shock as well as he might, and making his way through the press as speedily as possible, he rushed into the open air and aimed at once for the widow's. There he was sure to find one respectful auditor at least, and ample consolation for the miscarriage of his oratory.

To his utter and unqualified astonishment, he was there informed that the widow had gone out with her uncle an hour before and wasn't expected back in a week! What could this mean? His mind was filled with dreadful forebodings—horrible surmises! It could not be that they had left home to drown themselves together? that they had gone out to fight a promiscuous duel because the widow had seen fit to show more partiality and affection for him than for her own uncle? that they had ascended the top of the shot-tower to study astronomy for a short time, and then to plunge for ever from its dizzy height? Notwithstanding these conflicting conjectures, Noadiah went straight home and immediately examined the Table of Consanguinity in the Bible, to ascertain whether uncle and niece were within marriageable degree.

Next morning's paper explained the whole matter in the most artless manner. It was neither drowning, murder nor aerial precipitation—but simply matrimony. The announcement set forth the parties as Jonas Tupp, cartman, and Mrs. Amelia Bobbin, 'both of this city.' The relationship appeared to have been perfectly imaginary—a merely playful hypothesis.

As to the inspection of staves, it was considered so far beneath Bott's dignity and the worth of his services as to be given to one Zacchias Bull, or Bullwinkle, or some such zoological fellow; and Bott was informed by private letter that his application had been hotly opposed by his very good friend, the Alderman who had tendered his invitation to the Common Council to visit a remarkable tortoise twenty-three weeks under a stone, &c., on the ground that said invitation (the most serious operation of Bott's life) was a deliberate imposition, as he was satisfied, on the understanding of the Honorable the Corporation!

"Re-appear ye sad tenants of the narrow house!"

POTTERS' FIELD.

I STAND upon the graves of the poor. Over this simple field, unvaried by mark or monument, I cast my eye and feel the power and presence of death more than in the tombs of kings, or standing beside those huge mausoleums, the pyramids. Here the grim phantom stalks naked; not skulking as in the cemeteries of the rich and prosperous, behind funeral piles, or stealing away from the gaze amid masses of carved marble. Every step of the tyrant falls clear and distinct upon the grave of some lowly son of earth and poverty. How many of the children of sorrow have tottered into this humble burial-place, and thrown down the weary burden of grief and wretchedness under which they had fainted in the sun.

All-accordant must be the trumpet-blast that can melt into one harmonious web of life these motley elements. What a pageant of wretchedness and rags and penury would the habitants of this single acre form, could they be summoned from their rest. Moscow's bell should ring to raise the awful curtain, and bring upon the stage the parti-coloured company.

An archangel's peal alone could startle back into life (from which their suffering was so deep and piercing) the various multitude. An omnipotent edict in truth it would require to force them once more upon a scene where anguish and tears were their only legacy, and the grave—the quiet, rent-free grave, their reversion!

Many as the citizens that people the bottom of the deep, are the myriads that have sunk silently as into an ocean billow, into the bosom of this green earth. I will try a simple spell of my own: perchance it may bring them up, at least in phantasy.

"Re-appear ye sad tenants of the narrow house once more on the earth where ye suffered! I here establish a court of death. Ye are summoned to the trial; answer ye to your names. Hear ye! hear ye!"

"Saul Rope? Saul Rope?" Slowly from the earth, near at my feet, a pale, shrunken being shakes off the green mould, and feebly aiding himself with his hand on his grave's side, steps into the twilight.

His dress is an entire suit of gray, coarse linsey-woolsey, with a plain, cheap hat, without nap or buckle. "I was a saw-filer," said the poor apparition, "and kept a small shop in Doyer street. When I set up there I had a few friends at first, but they soon dropped off. The street was so crooked that nobody could find their way to me, even if they wanted my services; no one except an old bachelor with a twist in his neck, who seemed to have a natural facility in threading the windings of the alley, and who came (not on business, but) to enjoy my pleasant conversation! Besides, a middle-aged lady, who was born in the street, and who had a praiseworthy fondness for her place of nativity, and who visited me annually the day before Christmas, to have her carving-knife put in order for the holidays. By-and-by the old lady died off—the bachelor bought a little farm and retired into the country, and I was forced to abandon my thankless trade of saw-filing and go upon the watch. Of a feeble frame I soon caught a cold, fell into a galloping consumption, and you see me here. Thank God! there was no wife nor little child to weep the day that the simple saw-filer died."

The next dead defendant was a corpulent, hale fellow, who answered to the name of Robert Drum, and was clad in tattered and ragged garments, without hat, shirt or boots, whose story, in brief was, that "he had been a beggar, and had died of good-living and repletion."

After him Peter Packhorse and family were called. At first no one appeared, but, on a repetition of the summons, a small middle-aged man was seen making his way from a remote part of the field, with a sickly woman hanging on his right arm, and a train of twelve or thirteen thinly clad, pale girls and boys following them.

The tale of Peter's distresses was touching and pathetic.

"Upon the banks of the sunny Bronx, in the sweet and cheerful village of White Plains," said Peter, "God cast my lot. I owned a few patrimonial acres, and in my early youth took to myself a buxom and bonny wife, and together we made a little Paradise of our farm, for every thing was abundant and in good order. The seasons were our friends, and the clear stream that ran by our door

kept us close to our home by its cheerful voice and its ever delightful, rippling music. In summer I gathered in my harvest, with my first-born boy and girl at play between the swathes and winrows, and when the autumn came, and the winter was provided for, I would take my gun or my angle in my hand, and strolling away into the rich crimson woods or along the mossy streams, meditate upon the bounties and blessings Heaven had given me in my fertile farm, my bonny wife and my sweet-featured boy and girl. Thus three joyous years glided by, and prosperity made me a christian in the open fields, and a devout worshipper in the church. On the last day of the winter of ———, a cousin of mine, a black-browed, thoughtful man, arrived in the mail-coach from the city on a visit of friendship. He stayed little more than a week, but made so good use of his time, as to persuade me to sell my farm, turn it into cash, and, carrying my family with me, settle in New York, and become a broker—a sorry shaver of notes. The profits that he conjured up before me seemed so rapid and sure, the business so light, airy and gentleman-like, (who is it that has never been fired with the passion of becoming a gentleman!) that I fell in with his proposition, and early in spring disposing of my farm and stock at vendue, hastened to town. Here I soon lost the better half of my ready cash; my dark-browed city cousin absconded with the balance, and I, with a family which had doubled, was upon the town. In a short time, even my darling children, (yes, the bright fairy boy and girl of my country days too!) were snatched from me by an envi ous fever, and I was alone with my wife in the vast city without bread. I obtained employment, precarious and cheap employment it was, as a journeyman shoemaker: for every farmer in the parts where I was born knows something of the trade. Thus I sustain ed myself for a few years, a new family of children having sprung up and died at my side in the mean time. My wife followed her thirteenth child, (a pretty, lovely girl!) My staff of life was broken. The trade at which I toiled bent me double, and, in the ninth year after I had left that little Eden, on the banks of the Bronx, a disease of the spine fastened upon me. I lay sick for months, in a low, vile shed, racked by intolerable pain of body, and worse anguish of mind, until I died and came here to lie with my wife and children in everlasting rest! I would that a river ran by our graves —something like the Bronx!"

I could hardly refrain from tears, at the recital of Peter's simple

story, but, mastering my emotion, and turning my face toward another quarter of the field, I cited—

" Paula Hops?"—At this summons, a light, female form, endued in a black, bombazine gown, with a white vandyke about the neck, stepped out of her grave upon the earth, with something of natural grace in her gesture, and gave the following history of herself.

" I am a poor seamstress," said the fair vision, a hectic glow shining through her pale cheek, and a doubtful brilliancy kindling her eye, " I was born to that vocation. My mother and grandmother before me were seamstresses, and lived in comfort and plenty; but that was in different times from these. Tailors did not ride in carriages then, that poor girls might starve.

" Their labour was at least worth the candle they burned far into the night to pursue it by; but I do them wrong, *they* never burned the midnight lamp. Their hours were at the worst from sunrise to sunset. I toiled often from the first streak of morning till the neighbouring clock tolled twelve at midnight, or one on the morning of the next day. And see! this is my reward—these are the wages for which I wasted my young blood, health and spirits, and finally my life!" and saying this, she took from her bosom and handed to me a soiled and rumpled paper, containing the following particulars:

" Seamstresses' Prices:—Six hours work on a common vest six and a quarter cents. Twenty-four hours work on Baboon coats of kersey, fifty cents. Twelve hours work on Navy shirts with star-collars, twelve and a half cents. Two days work on blanket coats with fourteen buttons, fifty cents. Frocktees of duffle-cloth for stout bodied men, twenty-four hours' labour, thirty-seven and a half cents. Pantaloons with fly fronts and straps, eleven hours, twenty-five cents, &c."

And leaving this guilty and barbarous catalogue in my hands the fair victim disappeared.

Next, I called up in succession and heard the elegiac histories of Poor Joe Crutch, an old pauper, with a red bandanna about his head; Susan and Sarah Sparkels, a pair of spinster sisters, withered and sad, who came up arm-in-arm, as if they occupied a joint grave; Sam Weatherly, a paralytic poultry-merchant; Moll or Mary Jones, huckster; two red-faced butchers that died of apoplexy within a day of each other—(the old co-partnership) Bull and Bullock; a pauper negro, Nick Johnson; five or six sickly-looking,

crook-backed, wood-sawyers; Quibble, a rusty attorney, with the dirty end of a declaration in covenant sticking out of his breeches' pocket, &c., &c.

"Call into Court!" I exclaimed in a voice of command, to a feeble, old crier of the Common Pleas, that had appeared (privilege of his former office,) without summons to tell his tale of wo—"Call into Court! all those that have died of harsh usage and broken hearts!" and, feeble as was the voice of the tottering beadle, at his summons an innumerable company of haggard creatures started up and swarmed in every part of Potters' Field. A countless throng of faces was before me, men, women and children—but, all of them wearing a certain proof of the deep anguish that had cut to the heart and brought them to the grave. Who knew their malady, as they pined away day by day, like fruits that perish internally, and drop from the tree without seeming frost or blight? None! not one!

Some of them died off abruptly—others lingered along for months, and a few to whom nature had furnished stout, masculine hearts, weathered it for a year or two; and then the undertaker (such a one as poverty could afford) was called in; the hearse stood at the door; the neighbours' children gathered wonderingly about the house and walk; a few of the better-hearted neighbours dropped in; more of them looked out at their windows, or put their caps together and discussed the dead one's disease—some calling it pleurisy, and some, nearer the truth, an affection of the heart, but none, not one (unless some single sister or shrewd aunt that lived with the poor family,) dreaming it was that terrible and crushing form of the disease—a broken heart. Thus the poor-house train passes from the door; the corpse in its plain pine-coffin is deposited in the grave; and henceforth the dead is dead to *all* the earth! There is nothing by which to remember the poor that are gone! It is only over them as a multitude, whose combined sorrows and sufferings assume to the fancy a huge and dreadful aspect, that any one mourns.

As individuals while living none care for them but death;—dead none regards them but God!

GREASY PETERSON.

Smooth, unctuous, fish-faced being! that sittest duck-like, perched on the oil-barrel's edge, ready to make a plunge into the sea of business that roars at thy feet—Calmness personified, holy Peace, Placidity and Quiet descended to earth in the guise of a green-grocer! Greasy Peterson vulgar mortals have named thee, knowing not the true sweetness and blessedness of thy life in its even flow. Judged by thy garments thou art in truth a poor-devil. A blue coat patched like the sky with spots of cloudy black, oil-spotted drab breeches, cased in coarse overalls of bagging, are not the vestments in which worldly greatness clothes itself, or worldly wisdom is willing to be seen walking streets and highways. True, thou hast a jolly person and goodly estate of flesh and blood under such habiliments. Glide on, glide on Oleaginous Robert—like a river of oil, and be thy taper of life quenched silently as pure spermaceti!

Robert Peterson, Esq., green-grocer and tallow-chandler, possessed the most incongruous face that ever adorned the head of mortal.

His nose thrust itself out, a huge promontory of flesh, at whose base two pool-like eyes sparkled small, clear and twinkling, while a river of mouth ran athwart its extreme projection, flowing almost from ear to ear, with only a narrow strip of ruddy cheek intervening.

Within, greasy Bob possessed a mind as curiously assorted as his countenance. It was composed of fragments of every thing, bits of knowledge of one kind and another strangely stitched together, and forming an odd patch-work brain, whose operations it was a merry spectacle to observe.

"Good morning neighbour Peterson," said a small, snipe-nosed fruiterer from next door, "Good morning!—I hope we shall have fine weather now the wind has shifted his tail to the Nor'-west."

"Hopes it may be so, Mr. Tart—the stars were precious clear last night, the sky was a healthy red this morning—and farmer Veal brought in his poultry to be ready for sale by noon. I hope the bank will give me a lift to day, for I did'nt know but we should lose our little girl last night—with the measles; she was sickly, very sickly. Perhaps peaches are cheap now? aren't they Mr. Tart? How is the little widow Mr. Tart. I bought a firkin prime butter Wednesday afternoon Mr. Tart, only one and six per pound. That dress of the young parson's is horrid taste, bright buttons and rainbow-coloured neckerchief!" And so Mr. Peterson would ramble on by the hour, touching on every imaginable subject, exhausting none, adorning all by a placid and inimitable face, and a peculiar, emphatic, jerking delivery. It is calculated by an acute and accurate neighbour of his, (a patent astronomical instrument-maker) that in one day Greasy Peterson touched on one hundred and twenty-three distinct and different subjects, without devoting more than two seconds and a quarter of remark to any one.

There was a flavour of this same grotesque humour in every thing that he said or did.

The store in which he carried on trade presented the same motley confusion and variety as his conversation. It was a congregation of an infinite diversity of wares and merchandizes; a piebald assemblage of boxes, candles, loaves, dried fish, fresh fish, green cabbage, red roses in pots in the window, scales, antique hatchets, pyramidal and cone-shaped loaves of sugar in blue-paper caps, cinnamons and cloves in flaunting frocks of yellow, and Greasy Peterson, presiding in the midst, mounted on keg or counter, like a Turkish Muezzin, in a rusty cocked beaver.

The outside of this singular edifice, answered aptly to the interior. Originally it was a low, stone building, with a tile roof, occupied as a powder house, with small, square windows, protected by iron gratings. About the twentieth year of the present century the tile roof had been shattered by a heavy thunder-clap, and for a time the little powder house remained tenantless, unless the landlord chose to collect his rent from a ghost in goggle eyes that was said to occupy the premises. In the year twenty-five, (I think it was) it fell into the hands of Mr. Peterson, who immediately set about converting it into a store and dwelling. The first step in this important undertaking was, to build upon the stone-work that had survived the storm, an upper story and attic of wood; and when this

was completed, the innocent little powder house looked very much like a stiff, old maid that has weathered half a dozen changes of fashion, and chooses to wear an under-gown of the last century, topped with a boddice and head-dress of the newest gloss.

Next, the windows were enlarged in length and breadth, the bars removed, and a noisy pair of shutters given to each.

But the finishing-stroke remained. The fantastic tenement was yet to be painted, and here the riant humour of Mr. Robert Peterson broke away from rein and bridle, and fairly galloped off with all the plain sense of the worthy chandler. He entered into contracts with no less than six painters for the painting and ornamenting of his new-fangled edifice, believing that no less a number could furnish a sufficient assortment of colours. And to each one of the six he gave special directions as to the compounding of novel and unheard-of varieties of tint.

The brain of the unctuous little grocer was so frenzied with a passion for painting and "touching up" every article within reach, that his worthy spouse feared that he might take a fancy to give "a new coat" to his fat-featured children themselves, and she accordingly despatched them on a short visit to their aunt Peterson's on the other side of the town: preserving herself from a similar visitation by an unusually taciturn and retired demeanour during the week.

And now that Peterson's powder house has left the brush of six painters, it shines upon the adjacent streets, a many-coloured meteor! rivalling the sky itself in the brilliancy and variety of its tints. It is sunset embodied in stone and wood, only with new and greater accessions of gorgeous hue. An enormous dot of paint, as it were, planted at the corner, saying, "stop here." A vasty exclamation-mark of red and blue and yellow, dashed down at the junction of the streets, demanding the wayfarer's pause, and the wagoner's mounted admiration.

As in a hero everything is (or should be) heroic, so, as I have before noted, every thing connected with the worthy green-grocer assumed some colour of the humorous.

The eleventh year from his opening store and establishing his family in the powder house, Mr. Peterson, by dint of large profits and small expenditures, was able to set up a snug equipage for family use. This was a light vehicle with a green leather cover, extending over the whole length, so that it resembled an airy market

Greasy Peterson & his Family setting out on a visit to their kindred in Westchester

wagon, fixed upon high, stout springs, and containing four seats within. Drawn by a single, sleek, shining nag of very moderate size and stature, the Peterson family were accustomed to visit certain kindred of their's living at Pelham and West-Farms. It was a rare sight to see them setting forth from the front-door of their gaudy dwelling: in front sate Greasy Peterson himself, smiling in a new, sky-blue coat, with bright buttons, tightly fastened up to his chin, light plush pantaloons, and an unctuous face and a pair of buckskin gloves; the whole person surmounted by a glossy black beaver hat; driving his way forward with considerable speed, by the aid of sundry encouraging chirrups and admonitory, "Geups," and "Get-a-longs." By the side of him was discovered the slim, upright form of Robert Peterson, jr., his eldest son, holding a black-handled coach-whip in his hand, with which he greeted in the progress of travel, innumerable vagrant curs, that hailed him open-mouthed at the doors by which they passed. On the seat immediately behind these two worthies sate Messrs. Eliphalet and Bildad Peterson, holding transverse across their breasts a candle-faced child, recently baptized Thalia, (softened by the same monsters that christened her sire "Greasy,") into Tallow Peterson. On the next seat rear-ward were disposed two interesting children in calico-frocks—Moses and Johnny Peterson, and supporting the utmost rear reposed Mrs. Sophia Peterson, the corpulent spouse of Robert, and Sophia Peterson, jr., a girl with a large head and beautiful set of delicate small teeth.

With this burthen behind him, the little nag ambled on quietly and in good cheer, although the vehicle that he drew was elevated so high above him, that the tenants of the wagon and the sleek horse, seemed to belong to altogether different planets. Their return from these visits was still more grotesque, for their family-carriage generally trundled into town garnished with baskets of fresh, sweet-scented apples, and a pair or two of tender poultry, presented by the kindly farmer-friends whom they had visited, hanging at the sides, enlivened at times by a gay string of onions, or an ambitious head of cabbage.

If I were called upon to name the prevailing characteristic of Mr. Peterson's mind, I should say, (with deference for better judgments) it was a certain, practical, business shrewdness, that never allowed itself to slumber or to be overreached. Whenever trade was the subject, or bargain the object of conversation, all the inco-

herence I have spoken of disappeared, and his mind flowed forth in a quiet, steady stream of plain good sense and useful knowledge. Those "outward limbs and flourishes" were instantly lopped off by the exacting knife of business and gain, and the simple, unadorned trunk of the matter stood disencumbered. Many are the prime bargains Peterson has entrapped unwary boatmen and butter-merchants into, by help of his rude garments and vagabond presentment.

"How much do you ask a pound for these firkins squire?" asked Greasy Peterson one day, dressed in his roughest suit of clothes, and a hat with only half a rim.

"Why, loafer," replied the captain of the sloop, to whom this question was addressed in a slouching, careless tone, "why uncle oily-breeches, I guess *you* may have it six pence a pound the lot."

"I'll take it sir!" said Greasy Peterson, throwing an air of considerable seriousness and dignity into his remark, which startled the rash butter-merchant slightly.

"But mind ye neighbour—it's cash down at that price! Come, fork over the solid, Old Rags," said the boatman, with a loud laugh, and turning with a quizzical leer to a group of captains and sloop-boys that had gathered to see the fun.

"Here it is!" responded Peterson, coolly, taking out a dirty buckskin bag, and counting down in hard silver the sum to which the twenty-five firkins of butter amounted; ordered the whole upon a cart, and jumping on himself, touched his hat very politely, and bade the astounded crew of boatmen, "good afternoon!"

The rash captain lives to this day, and indulges in a curious half-laugh, when he is engaged in bargaining, that is known along the wharves as the famous *Greasy Peterson chuckle.*

About the forty-third year of his age, the worthy grocer was visited by apoplexy which dried up his vital juices, and withered his person like an apple blown from the tree, nipped by autumn frosts. The physicians straightway hurried in, and bled him so freely, that the fresh gloss and old smoothness departed from his countenance, and left him a sorry spectacle compared with the former galliard and jovial creature that answered to his name. He however recovered so far in a few weeks as to be able to hobble out towards noon, and plant himself on a stool, on the sunny side of his store, to air his constitution, and receive the congratulations and good wishes of his friends and neighbours as they passed or paused awhile to inquire more minutely after his health. In a

short time, (despite his careful diet and the skilful practice of his physicians,) a second and heavier stroke of the disease fell upon him and carried him off, at two o'clock in the afternoon of the same day on which the celebrated Fat Ox, Billy Lambert, arrived in town.

THE ADVENTURES OF SOL. CLARION.

Gentle, charitable, benevolent reader! if thou feelest disposed to aid thine author in a sore perplexity, and to dispense unto him, out of the abundance of thy geographical erudition, permit him to address to thee (humbly confessing his manifold ignorance,) a single interrogatory: *Where* is the city of Peth? Many times have I journeyed along the highway, that runs through Greenwich, in the state of Connecticut, and heard some learned traveller that rode with me say—yonder is the city of Peth! pointing to the north-east: and looking thither, I have discovered nought but a common hill-side, with a single low tenement feebly sustaining itself amid a score of rocks, and three or four straggling apple-trees.

Nevertheless in that illustrious city, (wherever it be) the city of Peth, of whose inhabitants the country doggerel says—

Half ran away, and half starved to death,

did the equally illustrious Solomon Clarion find a dwelling-place.

Humanity never assumed a more joyous and gladsome form than thine, blithe Sol. Clarion! Ah! why didst thou leave the tumbling hay-mow, and the fresh stream, to become a pilgrim to this Babel of ours? Why didst thou abandon the festal company of rustic youths and maidens, to mingle with the tide of dark or care-worn faces that flows through our streets.

In his earliest prime, young Clarion lost his mother, (a golden woman—full of the delicacies and rich fruits that belong to her sex, dashed with something of a wilder savour,) and was brought to yonder poor dwelling to be a house-mate with his mother's parents.

Young Solomon's character soon developed itself, and proved to be of a "mingled yarn." None was gayer at school or in the orchard at play than he: and yet, at times, none was sadder or more thoughtful.

Some holidays he passed in merry game and wild frolic with his little school companions, others he spent far away in the woods, or wandering through the green meadows, or loitering slowly by the babbling brook. It was Solomon Clarion (that fear-nought boy) that rode the wild colts and ran at the heels of every mad bull that roared in the county! It was Solomon Clarion that was caught in an attitude of breathless and reverential regard, watching the glorious sunset or the stars climbing the sky.

In front of his grandfather's dwelling, and by the road-side, stood a dry, dead, old cherry-tree, which had been barren of fruitage for many years. It had been planted by a quaint, old bachelor uncle, and was considered a precious family relic; and as such, Sol. himself regarded it until one day, a clear April holiday, in a gamesome mood he doomed its overthrow. Gathering a noisy band of school fellows, he issued his warrant against Old Uncle Cherry, (the name by which it was known throughout the neighbourhood,) and, producing a coil of rope, ascended the tree, and fixed a halter about its mossy old neck. At a signal the boys gave a hearty pull, (none heartier than Clarion!) and, with a clamorous shout, it fell to the earth. In a moment or two Solomon was missing, and his comrades after considerable search discovered him over the fence, with tears in his eyes, sliding a fragment of the mouldering bark of Old Uncle Cherry thoughtfully into his pocket. So strange a creature was Clarion!

Sol's chosen friend and boon-companion was a simple fellow by the name of Will Robin—or Foolish Will, as he was better known, and whose general character (although brightened and improved by occasional flashes of wit and shrewdness) justified the epithet. He was the butt and target of all the boors for twenty miles around. If any farmer or farmer's son, or serving-man wished to be witty at the very cheapest rate and smallest possible expenditure of thought, no better luck could betide him than to chance upon Foolish Will. If a gallant was anxious to obtain the reputation of vast facetiousness and great brilliancy of intellect with his mistress, his fortune could be no sooner made than by having poor Robin drop in to have a few small, innocent jests thrust into his pincushion brain without reply.

But Solomon Clarion found better matter and better services in Will than these. He saw in the poor varlet concealed veins of feeling and odd streaks of fancy, chequering what the world consider-

ed, his vacant heart and blank intellect. He saw in him innocence and purity, a sense of love, and a deep sense of attachment wasted (unless some human being like himself chose to garner them for the simple owner,) on dogs and birds, and horses, and others of the thoughtless tribe.

Conversation with Will, too, though sadly strange and disjointed, occasionally let the light in, as it were through the chinks of a disordered brain, upon curious trains and passages of thought. At times he garnished his remarks unconsciously, with rare conceits that might have gained for one of our elder poets the reputation of a bountiful wit.

"As true as I'm Will Robin," he exclaimed one clear, fair evening, as they were returning together through a meadow from a long summer's day ramble, "yonder's preacher Purdy's new white beaver hat—nailed up by the rim—Look!"

Sol. Clarion gazed in the direction to which he pointed, and answered, "why Will, I see nothing where you point but the plain, old moon in her first quarter."

"You may well call her plain," replied Will, catching at a new thread of thought; "If it be the moon, (I'm not clear on that point yet,) she is the only decent planet in the sky. *She* behaves something like, and keeps up a good bright light when it's wanted, and is dressed in good, homely, clean linen in the bargain: while your fiery old sun capers up and down in crimson velvet, making every body lecherous and apoplectic—I don't care who knows it."

"It's preacher Purdy's hat—is it Will?" said Clarion, anxious to bring him back to his original suggestion, and to see what he would make of it.

"Yes it *is* preacher Purdy's hat, I'm sure of that; for don't I see the woolly nap on it now that I look closer," (clapping his hand folded like a telescope to his eye, and watching as two or three fleecy clouds crossed the disk of the planet,) "What a beautiful wren-house and place for swallows and martins! I wish my little flock of blue-coated beauties had as good quarters—It's softer and nicer than an old black hat. But the preacher 'll have to go bare-headed to meeting next Sabbath—that 'll be funny!" And poor Will burst into a boisterous roar of laughter, in which Sol. was forced to join, for the sake of good fellowship.

In all Sol. Clarion's jovial doings and merry-makings, Foolish Will was a faithful squire and attendant: and, simple as was the

brain of the strange creature, it always had sufficient sagacity to comprehend the drift and purpose of a joke of Sol's., and to furnish its little tribute of suggestions to help it forward. One day, (it was Sunday, in June,) it came into Sol. Clarion's head to make a pilgrimage, with rod and line, to Rye Pond or Lake Westchester, some five or six miles distant from his home. He lay under an apple-tree, cogitating some method of safe and easy conveyance, when Foolish Will, in one of his wild capers, came rolling down the hill into the orchard, and directly against the ribs of the thoughtful Solomon.

"Heigho," cried he, "this is a new style of salutation on a Sunday morning. I have full confidence, Will, in your affection without these heavy tokens. Be pleased to take off your carcase and give me a comfortable morsel of advice."

"Advice! Sol. if you want that, it is but a stone's throw to friend Bloom's, and he hath enough to turn his own mill and some over for his neighbours. That's a fine owl of a fellow his oldest son—I'm sure of that Solomon!" And he twisted his face as nearly into an outline of the bird's visnomy, as his smooth features would allow.

"Never mind Booby Bloom, Will," continued Clarion, "I'm bent for a fishing-excursion to-day."

"And want me to hang on as a poor worm for bait I suppose," and an altogether unnecessary tear filled the eye of the gentle-hearted fool.

"No, no, Will, not for that," returned Solomon in a persuasive accent. "No Willie you must borrow some good neighbour's horse and wagon, and ride with me!"

"Black snakes and tree-toads take me if I will," exclaimed poor Robin, "I'll ride without loan or purchase. There's old Bloom's black nag running at large in the woods; all the family's away to meeting, saving blind Dick and deaf aunt Sally. Come, I'll bring down gran'father's rusty saddle, and we'll mount and shog off. Come," he concluded, taking Clarion by the hand, and drawing him up from his recumbent position, "come Master Solomon, it's the best thing we can do." And so Master Solomon seemed to think too, for he leaped up, ran into the house, and in a trice brought forth a dusty demi-pique saddle and broken bridle, which latter he handed to Foolish Will. They soon reached the woods together, the black nag was speedily caparisoned, and they were on their way to the Pond.

That was a delicious day to the soul of Sol. Clarion. Grave joys (if I may so speak,) and pleasing sadness blended together, and steeped him in a stream of pure delight. Nature on one side opened her fair page, and on the other side sat Will Robin, a most rare and queer commentator, turning all things into fantastic shapes and startling the woods and the waters with fancies never before heard. Before Sol. as he sate upon a jutting rock, embowered in trees, the cheek of the sweet pond swelled with the curve and fullness of beauty itself; kissed by forest shadows that here and there fell like caresses from the waving trees. Now and then a stray duck started out from the shore, and flew, like a silent thought, to an opposite quarter of the lake, or a water-snake slipped, from its sunny covert on the margin, back into its native element. Afar the meadows stretched and swelled into gentle hills, which lay basking in the sun, with an ox or horse now and then stealing quietly across the landscape. Behind them (the Prince of Darkness must have a foothold somewhere!) Bloom's black nag is tethered in the bushes, munching a handful of fresh clover.

"See yonder thick-skinned philosopher!" said Will Robin, pointing to an old turtle that had perched himself upon a rock in the middle of the pond, "I suppose he has mounted that dry pulpit to hold forth to his watery congregation. D'ye know Solomon, (Master Solomon I mean,) that I sometimes think that those turtles are Evil Spirits, that haunt ponds and marshes, in the same way as bad men run up and down the world with wicked designs. That fellow's like a watchman in his box that I've heard tell of in the city! he sees every body, but no one (unless the Great Jehovah) can see the workings and twistings of his ugly face in his shell. I believe that vile turtle yonder *is* Satan," concluded Will, his eyes gleaming with a supernatural light, and his frame trembling with some sudden fear suggested by the allusion, "for I saw him snap a poor sinner of a fly in his jaws; and now see he's going to bear him down with him to hell—to hell—to hell." And poor Robin mumbled the last phrase over and over as the turtle glided slowly from the rock and disappeared.—About sunset they returned home, and loosed the black nag in the woods from which they had taken him.

The next morning, just after breakfast, a man about forty-five years of age presented himself at the door in a brown, quaker-cut coat, low shoes, and a pair of loose, grey pantaloons, that flaunted about his ankles. Furthermore, he had a short nose and a broad-

brimmed hat, from underneath which a stiff, bristling shock of hair spread out over his coat-collar like the tail of a young wren.

"A good morning to thee my friend," said this personage, through his short organ, "and a very good morning to *thee* my young friend, after that pleasant ride of thine on the Lord's day, and on a stolen horse!"

These latter words were more particularly addressed to our friend Solomon, who sate on a bench at the feet of the old people; his grandfather and grandmother. Clarion blushed, and the old people turned pale at the heinous and diabolical charge. They were so completely astounded that they sate silent.

"My young friend," continued Mr. Bloom, giving a not very amicable look at Solomon, "I'll tell thee what, I will not put thee in the White Plains' jail this time, but I will give thee some wholesome advice," perhaps Sol. Clarion would have chosen the jail rather than the advice, but friend Bloom gave him no option, and proceeded, "abandon that crack-brain William Robin to his fate; go to thy school many more times than thou dost; spend thy holidays nearer at home, and ride not my black mare to the Pond without my permission." He then addressed a solemn chapter of advice and admonition to Sol's. grandfather and grandmother, and wiping the corner of his mouth with his coat-sleeve, placidly disappeared through the same door that introduced him to the reader.

Such are the early incidents of our adventurer's history.

Solomon Clarion was now fast verging toward manhood. In a few days he would be entitled, (besides a moderate sum of ready money,) to enter upon, whatever right he possessed in a small cantle of property, (three or four acres with a house,) that his mother had bequeathed to him. The present situation of that property was this; an uncle of Solomon's had purchased or paid a mortgage upon it given by Mrs. Clarion, and taken possession and enjoyed it ever since her death, upon that barren title. Possession he still maintained, and refused to hold any conversation with young Clarion on the subject. A neighbouring farmer into whose land the acres in question made an awkward elbow was anxious to buy Solomon's title, and dispossess the unlawful occupant. In this perplexity, Sol. thought he would have recourse to a legal gentleman, whom he had heard Will Robin often mention. This was Lawyer Doublet, a strange, old man, some fourscore years old, who lived upon the

road not far from the city of Peth: and upon him he resolved to call.

Accordingly one morning about a week before his minority expired, Solomon set out, in company with Will, for the residence of Counsellor Peter Doublet. In a short time they reached an ancient-looking stone house, and, poor Robin knocking at the door and inquiring for the legal genius of the place, they were ushered up stairs; and here, Clarion was introduced by his friend Will to Lawyer Doublet, and was particularly struck with his appearance. As that venerable advocate rose and came forward, with a very graceful bow to welcome them, he presented to Sol's. eye a well-preserved model of mortality, with a flowing white wig, like that in the portraits of Sir Isaac Newton, curling over his shoulders; a black velvet coat with silver buttons, and skirts stiffened with buckram, covering a very moderate set of limbs; a scarlet vest beneath the same; a set of white small clothes joining black silk hose, and shoes with huge silver buckles.

The personal history of this antique-looking member of the bar dwelt under a haze of considerable obscurity. It was rumoured that he had taken an active part on the royalist side during the revolutionary war, and now lived upon a pension which he received from the king's coffers. He still preserved and strictly maintained the vesture and habits of the last century, and obstinately refused to lay aside the smallest tittle or thread of his dress, or to abate a single jot of the severity of ancient manners. In truth he was a creature of past times. The best part of his life had lain in the eighteenth century, and he was, in a manner, a trespasser upon the territory of the nineteenth. All his thoughts and feelings dated back forty years. He saw every object through time's telescope inverted. The books that he read and quoted, the cogitations that he cogitated, the opinions he delivered were all musty with age.

The apartment into which Clarion had been introduced was in character with its curious proprietor. From the windows hung old, damask curtains, with gold-lace borders, which permitted a mild twilight to creep through the room, part of which fell upon an ancient case of books, fastened against the opposite wall. Every volume was black with years. Behind a little, low table strown with pieces of parchment, silver-hilted pens, and curious old pipes and snuff-boxes, stood a high-backed chair with a red-leather cush-

ion, ornamented with a pair of raised cock-pheasants fighting a duel under an oak branch similarly executed, and striving to pick each other's eyes out: a very happy illustration of the benefits of sprightly litigation!

When the whole party was seated, Sol. Clarion briefly opened his case, and stated his strong desire to sell the land to Farmer Bull, who had offered a fair price: mentioning at the same time Farmer Bull's reluctance to pay a very large sum for making and drawing the deed, and his own unwillingness to become a party to an ejectment suit against his uncle.

"I see the remedy Mr. Clarion," said Lawyer Doublet, rising under considerable excitement, and pacing to and fro between his high-backed chair and the window. "I see it Sir, as clear as a plea in chancery with twelve branches!"

"And pray what is it, if you please Sir?" asked Solomon, in breathless expectation.

"Nothing less Sir than livery of seisin!" and he looked earnestly into Clarion's face, expecting no doubt to see it brighten with joy at this fortunate and profound suggestion.

"Will that cost much?" inquired Sol. Clarion.

"No, Sir: a mere trifle. It is the cheapest, and plainest, and wisest, and noblest, and finest, &c., &c., process ever devised by brain of man, for conveyance of lands!—If I knew the author of it my young friend, I would plant his bust up there, and you, my good old king," (addressing himself to a bronze head of George II., standing on the top of his book case,) "you would have to tramp! 'when the sage comes up the king goes down,' Mr. Clarion, as the Baker's broadside of 1790 hath it."

"Yes," humbly suggested poor Will, "'and ten to one both have a cracked crown;' your sage addles his in attempting to stuff it too full of reading, and your king breaks his in attempting to stretch it larger!" and Will burst into a hearty laugh while Sol. Clarion smiled.

This sally however was not quite so well received by Counsellor Doublet, who assumed his most portentous look of professional consequence, and thrusting his hands into his hinder coat-pockets, strided up and down the room rebuking the unfortunate Robin for his audacity in trying wits with Peter Doublet, Esquire, Counsellor, who had Touchstone at his finger's end, and was so profoundly

read in the Twelve Tables, as to sometimes believe himself to have been one of the framers of the same.

Will most humbly apologized, (Clarion aiding him,) and they relapsed into business.

"I will prepare the papers that are necessary between yourself Mr. Clarion and Mr. Obed Bull," continued Counsellor Doublet, with more gravity and weight of manner than he had at first exhibited, "and next Wednesday, (I think Tuesday is your twenty-first birth day, Mr. Clarion;" Clarion nodded acknowledgment,) "next Wednesday morning we will ride to the property, myself and you Mr. Clarion, and Mr. Bull; and this poor creature may go with us; perhaps he may minister some trifling service: and there we will deliver possession by livery of seisin under the old law, (the d—l taking if he please, lease and release, and such modern traps and tricks of petifoggers)."

An hour was named for the parties to assemble at the house of Lawyer Doublet; Clarion and Will Robin arose to depart, and with them rose the Counsellor himself, and opening the door, he heralded the way down stairs, unfastened the front-door, and, standing uncovered upon the stone porch, he bowed twice or thrice, and ceremoniously bade Solomon Clarion, "a good day—with God's blessing!"

Promptly at the appointed hour Sol. Clarion on a bright bay horse, borrowed from a neighbour, and Foolish Will Robin on a rough colt, obtained in a similar manner, wheeled up to the door of Lawyer Doublet. In a short time the Counsellor came forth, dressed as we have described him, with the additional personal ornaments of a sword at his side, with a silver hilt, a cocked hat, fringed with gold lace, on his head, and a blue bag containing his papers and documents under his arm. As he stepped from the porch, a high, raw-boned steed of a mixed sorrel complexion was brought up, tricked out in an antique martingale, old double bits; a horse-cover in the style of the revolution, and a saddle about fifty years old. With the aid of Foolish Will, Counsellor Doublet, (having carefully attached the blue bag to the saddle-bows,) mounted into the broad shovel stirrups, and, being in a few minutes joined by Mr. Obed Bull, in a buff coat, the party set out for the scene of action, which was about three miles up the road. They formed a gallant spectacle for the dames of King street, as they galloped

along. Almost each moment a head was thrust out from some shrewd post of observation, and some new face broadened with wonder at beholding Counsellor Doublet riding between Bull and Clarion, the representative and memento of times that they had heard grandsires and old women only speak of. The rustics in the field paused in their labour, and leaned upon their rakes or plough-tails to gaze with dilating eyes. The horses turned their heads in the furrow and stared. The oxen licked their hairy cheeks in admiration; and it was said, with some show of truth, that a tin pigeon, acting as weathercock on Farmer Barley's farm, wheeled about on its pivot, in spite of the wind, and rolled its painted eye-balls and shook its painted tail in wonder and astonishment.

It was a glorious day in mid-August; serene, tranquil, beautiful. The sky was without spot or wrinkle of cloud, on its clear, blue surface. On each side of the road tall pear trees stood, swarming with rich, ripe fruit; near every house lay an orchard enamelled with countless coloured apples, red, green, damask, yellow and white, of every kind. In one field that they passed, half a dozen fresh looking countrymen were at work laying the stout grass upon the ground, like files of proud soldiers, gay with green feathers flaunting in the wind in the morning, at eve to be dry and withered. In a neighbouring meadow a sportsman in a fustian hunting-coat, and white hat, with shot-pouch, powder-flask and gun, was creeping along the fence to obtain a shot at a meadow lark sitting on a rock in the middle of the meadow. He steals closer and closer. In a moment the merry-maker of the skies will lie stretched on the cold stone. *Peal-it! peal-it! peal-it!* is the sound issuing from a stout throat in yonder tree. It is the cry of a sentinel lark, and that is his watch tower. His winged brother takes notice, and in a twinkling curves far along the air, beyond the reach of gun or sportsman.

Away the four horsemen gallop; Will Robin dropping a little in the rear, to dismount and catch a woodchuck, which was perambulating a fence by way of exercise, after a hearty meal of clover.

This enterprize is nipped in the bud by Sol. Clarion's falling back with poor Robin, and asking, what he was slipping out of his saddle for?

"It's our duty, Master Sol. to look after the belly," said Will, "and I was thinking that woo'chuck which has nothing to do, now that he's taken his breakfast, but to be cooked, would make a nice pie for supper when we got home."

Foolish Will's anxiety about provender was very soon allayed, by Clarion's announcing to him that they expected to dine at Farmer Bull's as they returned, and that a fat young turkey was in preparation. Will's eye sparkled at the savory announcement, and they speedily regained their places in the cavalcade.

On a scaffold in front of a weather-beaten, yellow farm-house, which they passed, a gay party of travelling carpenters were at work. There is something charming to the fancy in the strolling life of these country Chips. They ramble about pleasant villages and country places—your only modern Amphions and Troubadours—singing their cheerful catches, and building as they sing. Half a dozen choice journeymen cluster together, and form a merry crew, plying the chisel and mallet in rural neighbourhoods; repairing, like these, some time worn farm-house, or raising up in more bustling parts, a snug cottage to be the harbour of happy spirits, for many blooming and fragrant years or, like a flock of piping swallows, chirping about a breach in the roof of some venerable old church. Now and then bandying a jest with the plump kitchen-wench, (it matters not whether she be black or white—they will have their joke!) or indulging a sly inuendo among themselves at the expense of the blushing, young married couple, whose home they are finishing. Everywhere too they are regaled with grateful viands—healthful breakfasts—hearty dinners—genial suppers; "we must have something good," says the housewife, "for to-morrow the carpenters are coming!"

Shortly after they had passed this jovial company of workmen, they reached a small wooden house, with a dry, dull aspect, as if it had been pelted with all the winds and weathers of half a century, without the defence of paint or colour of any kind. It stood upon a knoll facing the north, and had a solitary, lonely appearance as they came upon it. In front was a small court-yard, (with barn-yard, and poultry-yard, blended with it,) and tying their horses to the rough bar-fence that surrounded it, they all dismounted, and entered a clumsy gate, which opened into the enclosure, except Foolish Will, who under a direction from Counsellor Peter, scampered off up the road. The Counsellor then unhooked his blue bag from its place at the saddle-bows, and hugging it under his right arm, marched with great solemnity up to the door of the house, accompanied by Bull in a buff coat, and Clarion in green pantaloons. Here he planted himself upon the steps leading to the same, and

laying down his cocked hat and blue bag, with great deliberation upon a neighbouring bench, he stood erect and surveyed the three acres and a half of arable land to be conveyed to Obed Bull, farmer, with monstrous complacency and inward satisfaction. In a few minutes Will Robin came dashing down the highway with great expedition and heat, and announced to Counsellor Doublet, "that none was to be got!" meaning that he could obtain no persons to attend the important ceremonies about to take place, as witnesses. "Then off your horse," cried out Mr. Peter Doublet in an ectasy of authority, "blow this vile tin horn!—that will make our proceedings public—and, perhaps, answer as well!" At this behest Foolish Will dismounted, and seizing the abject piece of metal, sounded a dozen or two of round blasts; and in answer one lazy looking young negro was brought out of the fields, (mistaking it innocently for the dinner blast, although it was now only about ten in the morning!) and a limping old farmer from across the way, who came hobbling into the yard, staring at Lawyer Doublet, as if he had been a genuine phantom in a velvet coat, flowing wig, and white small-clothes. Fortunately there was no one in the house, or they would have been brought down upon the party in a twinkling, by this uproarious summons; the barbarous uncle of Clarion being some distance down the road helping a farmer get in his hay, and the lazy looking negro boy alone having charge in his absence. "Now we will proceed to livery of seisin! as settled in Madox and Craig," said Peter Doublet fumbling in his blue bag, "and first, I will read in the presence of these many good witnesses the warrant of attorney, whereby I am empowered to fulfil feoffment of this house and land." And saying this, he recited in a good old-man's voice the contents of a paper which he had disintered from its azure sepulchre, containing power, authority, warrant, &c., to convey said house and land in the name and stead of Solomon Clarion, of the city of Peth, to Obed Bull of King street. And then, drawing forth a second paper from the same blue receptacle, he proceeded to declare the contents thereof, describing the tenement with all the appurtenances, standing thus and thus, and the lands belonging to the same, running with this brook, and under that tree, with a white flint-stone at its extreme corner.

He then said descending from his elevation, "neighbours and witnesses! leave these grounds, while I do deliver seisin and possession of the same to worthy Obed Bull!" and, after they had re-

tired into the road, and stood looking over the fence, at the further progress of this interesting ceremony, he continued, plucking up a huge clod in his hand, "Mr. Obed Bull, I do hereby in the name and by the authority and attorney's warrant of Solomon Clarion, deliver to thee seisin and possession of these lands, and all rights thereto appertaining, as described in the within deed."

At this precise stage of their proceedings, Mr. Uriah Bloom the short-nosed quaker, chanced that way on a rusty, grey nag, and wheeling up to the fence, turned about in his saddle, with a face wonderfully full of a magnanimous pity, and portentous of a very speedy discharge of comment and denunciation.

"Why friend Obed Bull," said he, through his short organ, "I did not truly expect to see thee, a man of much worldly sense and uprightness, engaged in this heathenish folly, with that old white-wigged, silly-pated tory, Peter Doublet! Thou knewest better, Obed, thou knewest better! But I will leave thee to thine own practices, and punishments sequent thereon!" Saying this he turned and cantered at considerable speed on his journey down the road. Not more than five minutes had elapsed before the broad-brimmed hat and short nose of the quaker again came in view, hurrying back with an additional rider behind him on the rusty, grey nag. When the face of this new actor made itself visible, it struck considerable alarm into the bosom of Will Robin, and Mr. Solomon Clarion. It was the barbarous uncle. The approaching steed, thus doubly freighted, was however hidden by the house from the gaze of Mr. Obed Bull and Counsellor Doublet; which latter worthy was proceeding with great vigour in the process of livery of seisin.

He had again mounted the stone steps, searched the house to find whether it was wholly empty, and fit for delivery, and laying his hand upon the iron hasp of the door, exclaimed, "I do hereby in the name and by the warrant of Solomon Clarion, deliver to thee Obed Bull, seisin and possession of this house and all unto it that appertains! Enter into this tenement and God give thee joy of it." At that moment a large red rooster who had stood a long time upon the barn-yard fence, in patient expectation of a hearing, and who seemed inclined to perform the part of clerk in these services, opened his throat and made the responses to Counsellor Doublet, in a clear, audible voice: Mr. Obed Bull seized the hasp, opened the door, and had just thrust his foreleg across the threshold to enter, when, lo! he was met full in the face by the barbarous uncle,

I'll give your liver a seasoning you lout!

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(unlawful occupant of the premises,) with a stout oak cudgel in his hand, who dealt the said Obed Bull, donee, &c., several very hearty tokens of admiration of the conduct he had pursued in purchasing said land, and obtaining livery of seisin as aforesaid. "I'll give your liver-a' seasoning—you lout!" cried the barbarous uncle, as he plied the flail. "I'll mark your title down in black and white!" and he dealt him a sore blow over the bridge of the nose. By this time Mr. Obed Bull had evaded the cudgel, and the next object that fell into the clutches of the barbarous uncle was Peter Doublet, Esquire, who in consequence of his age, was not ribroasted and bastinadoed after the fashion of Mr. Bull, but was taken by the collar of his velvet coat, and quietly kicked through the garden-gate into the road. Meanwhile Friend Bloom had found his way silently into the front room of the tenement, and half opening a window shutter, looked cautiously on the scene; his short nose and broad-brimmed hat being skilfully concealed in the shadow of the shutter. The barbarous uncle tossed Doublet's gold-laced cocked hat over the fence, with the blue bag. The Counsellor picking up the former, and placing it upon his head, and Foolish Will gathering the scattered papers and parchments and thrusting them into the latter, the party mounted their horses, (Mr. Bull with great difficulty,) and turned their heads expeditiously homeward. They had not travelled far, however, in this direction, before they slightly slackened their pace, and Mr. Peter Doublet muttered, "by the head of King George, and the Pandects of Justinian! Mr. Clarion, I'll have revenge and satisfaction, on that scurvy uncle of thine before the week wanes! Yea will I!" (and he struck his sorrel a smart blow across the foreshoulder,) "I'll to the Supreme Court of Justice at once, and attach him with a mandamus writ of privilege!" The little Lawyer hereupon lifted his cocked hat from his head, and, carefully shaking the dust from its border, replaced it, with an air of much dignity, in its original position. Then turning upon Sol. Clarion, he asked in a tone of surprise, as if it had just crossed his mind, "Why Mr. Clarion didst thou not come to our rescue? being young and strong sinewed we might justly look for aidment and reinforcement from thee!"

To this Solomon simply replied, "that however much he might dislike his uncle, he was unwilling to come to blows with his mother's brother."

At length Foolish Will rode up to the side of Sol. Clarion, and the conversation took a new channel.

" I'm getting tired of this region of country," said Foolish Will, "the people about here are growing cold hearted towards poor Will; and poor Will's getting to be a man," sitting bolt upright in his saddle, " and must go travel and make voyages and see a little of the world? What say you Master Solomon, Will Robin leaves you to-morrow, and perhaps for ever!" At this announcement the innocent creature shed a tear upon the mane of his rough colt, and stretched out his left hand toward Sol. Clarion; and Sol. Clarion bringing his horse close to his side grasped it warmly with his own, and said, while tears gushed to his eyes, " Never! Will, never!— Though I am robbed of my rights—there's yet enough left for us both; and, Will Robin, long as the world lasts, though all the world else may turn you from their hearts and hearths, there's always a warm corner for you here!" And Sol. Clarion in the genuine honesty of nature, struck his hand upon his bosom. " But whither did you purpose to go, Will!" said he, mastering his emotion, and resuming the discourse, while he looked earnestly in the face of Foolish Will for a reply.

" I thought," responded Will, " I would take the coach for New York; and see if I could find any body in that big city, which I've heard tell swarms with people just like a hive in summer, that looked like Will Robin; all the folks in these parts despise the poor vagrant!"

" Why Will," replied Sol. Clarion, " I am going to the City myself to-morrow; will you bear me company?"

" I will, I will!" exclaimed that worthy, greatly excited and almost jumping out of his saddle with the violence of his delight.

" To-night then pack up our garments in the old portmanteau; yours Will in one end, mine in the other, and we'll take the stage with the first cock that crows!"

" Yes!" said Will, still in an ecstasy of enjoyment at the brilliant prospect of travel, " and I'll go to York, in a new dress; something fine. I guess it will astonish the natives." Hereupon Will discharged a heavy peal of laughter, and at that moment they found themselves in the renowned city of Peth, at the door of Sol. Clarion's home; those twin martyrs, Mr. Bull and Counsellor Doublet, having in the meantime galloped down the road and out of sight.

The next morning Will Robin was awake with the dawn ; and the sun had no sooner exhibited his jolly face from his eastern tippling shop, than Will Robin's corresponding feature shone through the portals of Sol. Clarion's dwelling, upon the whole subjacent region. Will was all smiles and complacency ; bustling from spot to spot; now taking up the dinner horn and blowing an idle blast and laying it down again; now dashing into the house to obtain some trifling commodity, and again bursting through the door into the open air, to stuff it into the capacious portmanteau. At the hour when the stage arrived Foolish Will presented himself as a passenger, tricked out in a short brown coat, with something of the quaker lurking about the collar, though it had altogether fled from the skirts, which were swallow-tailed; close homespun pantaloons ; a monstrous pair of jack-boots, borrowed from Sol. Clarion's grandfather, and upon his head, a sugar loaf, white felt hat, picked up in some random pil grimage to the garret of Counsellor Doublet. Sol. Clarion, who lingered behind Will Robin, having affectionately parted with his grand-parents, and received God-speed, came forth modestly attired in a plain, country made black hat, a dark blue coat with metal buttons, and other parts of dress to correspond. They both took up their position on a high back seat, outside, which overlooked the whole vehicle, turned their faces for a last look at the old homestead; the driver cracked his whip; the stage whirled off, and, in a moment the city of Peth and all that it held was lost from their gaze.

They had not travelled far down the turnpike before a new and unexpected object arrested their progress. This was nothing less than that learned and sagacious legal authority Peter Doublet, clad in his black velvet coat, white small clothes, and gold-laced cocked hat, with his sword at his side, three or four musty volumes under one arm, and under the other the portentous blue bag, with an appearance of unusual rotundity and repletion. Sol. Clarion was not a little surprised at this apparition, at this peculiar time, particularly as Mr. Doublet exclaimed to the driver, " I will take a seat Sir, with my friends on the outside; more especially as I shall need their services when I get into town, and wish, therefore to keep my eye upon them!" Saying this he passed his three dull-looking volumes and well stuffed blue bag up to Will, and very speedily mounted after them, into the third seat in the rear.

" How is this Counsellor Doublet?" asked Sol. Clarion, shaking

him by the hand, as the mail-stage again started off. "Whither are you travelling, Mr. Doublet, if I may put so bold a question?"

"I am travelling Mr. Clarion," replied the Counsellor, solemnly, "in quest of my lost professional honour. Yesterday morning I had it—this morning I awoke and where was it? Where was it?" he asked again, lifting his voice as if addressing a jury. "You ask me, Sir, whither I travel? I journey to the city of New York to obtain a mandamus writ of privilege, as an officer of the court!" With this answer to Clarion's interrogatory, Lawyer Doublet sunk into a dignified silence, which was steadily preserved for almost the entire remainder of the journey. Onward the stage-coach rolled, here disgorging a heavy leather bag, filled with letters, like the moon that planetary night-coach, discharging aërcolites, pleasant missives of her goddesship; there taking up a chance passenger, and again rumbling on its way for miles without pause or diversion, unless the hurling of a brown paper parcel, or some other slight token, from friends up the road, like a bomb, into an open door or window be so considered. In this way they rolled down into the pleasant village of Rye, and through that Huguenot stronghold New Rochelle, taking a bird's eye view of Mamaroneck, Pelham, and sundry other towns and hamlets as they glanced along.

Ever and anon Will Robin enlivened the journey by carolling forth fragments of rare and reverend ditties, such as; "As I walked forth in a morning in the month of May," or, imparting to his selections an air of greater sententiousness and profundity, as in the following scrap of shrewd rhyme:

> "A man of words and not of deeds,
> Is like a garden full of weeds:
> And when the weeds begin to grow,
> He's like a garden full of snow, &c.

At Eastchester, a spruce, spare man in a fur cap, with a large white cauliflower stuck in the button hole of a purple frock coat, and a slate coloured game cock under his left arm, came forth. There was something peculiarly queer and quizzical about this person's nose and mouth; a playful smile that rippled about the corners of the latter feature, like a rivulet with the sun shining on its surface, and a red glow hovering over the tip of the former, which seemed to be the humorous smile lingering above its birthplace, before it disappeared from the odd, little countenance forever.

The spruce, spare man was a new passenger, who seeing the

single vacancy, in the high outside occupied by Doublet, Clarion and Will, said "I'll take that seat, driver, as I'd like to make an observation or two on Nature as we go along. P'raps, gentlemen," turning to the worthy trio, "it'll not be inconvenient to have some pleasant conversation on natural wonders and such like as we travel. Besides, young Joseph," affectionately ogling his game cock with one eye, and a brace of young ladies within the stage-coach with the other, as he mounted into his seat, "might be inclined to play the physician inside there, and draw blood from the hands of those fair creatures without being reg'larly called in!"

At this sally the indescribable smile kindled about the mouth of the spruce passenger—the corresponding glow lit up the extremity of his nose, and patting the slate-coloured creature under his arm kindly on his crest—he sate for a moment intensely silent.

"Gentlemen," said he, warming into a fine flow of talk as the stage-coach rattled on, "the sooner we're known to each other the better. My name," bowing at each branch of the announcement to one of the King street travellers, "my name is Paul Hyaena Patchell; but you'll oblige me when you call upon me—for I intend to invite you all to my house before we part—by inquiring for P. Hyaena Patchell. I prefer that style, as you'll perceive it's more ferocious, and better suited for the keeper of a wild beast show, and the greatest collection of natural wonders now extant in the four quarters! I have been," continued the smart showman, "scouring the country for a five legged calf to complete my collection, or a cow with the horns growing upon her flanks! Confound the stupid creatures, they put me out. I couldn't as much as find one with even a moderate swelling to pass for a dromedary. Nevertheless I've met with a little success," brushing down the feathers of young Joseph cautiously, "gentlemen, I have picked up a game cock with a face just like General Jackson. "See!" holding up the slate-coloured bird, "every line's distinct—here's the warlike nose, the warrior eye, and" at this moment one of the legs of the interesting creature slipped from his hand, and dashed two thirds of a spur into the smart showman's wrist, who exclaimed, smiling faintly, "by the Bengal lion the general has just drawn his sword!" The conversation of the showman had been sustained in so high a pitch of voice as to be generally overheard, and a loud roar of laughter shook the mail-stage as he uttered this last remark.

"Can you tell me, Sir, as you seem to be summ'at of a philoso-

pher, why horses aren't born asses ?" asked Foolish Will, of the smart showman. On the latter gentleman's expressing a doubt of his ability to accommodate Mr. Robin with an answer, Will replied, " It's mainly Sir, for the want of ears !" And the smart showman fell into a thoughtful silence of several minutes duration.

They were now rattling over Harlæm bridge. The smart showman had again opened the floodgate of discourse, and a vast deal of good conversation passed between him and Will Robin on the subject of natural wonders; a mermaid with bowels of straw, belonging to him, that had been 'burnt out' one night by an accidental spark falling upon her tail; a famous Bengal lion, in his show, with the finest mouth of any animal of that species in christendom; all of which, closed with the observation that he thought that the arrival of the general would create a great excitement in town, and a fervent invitation for Will and his friend Mr. Clarion, to call at $9\frac{1}{4}$ Bowery, and see his collection.

Meantime, Clarion and Doublet were silent, until they came opposite Gallows hill, where an execution was taking place at that very time, and as Doublet beheld the poor victim dangling in the last agonies, he exclaimed—" My God ! what sight is yonder !— A man by the neck ! If man," continued the Counsellor, after a thoughtful pause—" If man were a poor dried pear or salted flitch of bacon, it would beseem well enough. It is bad enough to hang wolves and weasels, and other carrion. What a contempt must I have for my humanity, my young Sir, when I see a part of it strung up yonder like a bunch of foul garlic or hetchelled flax !" These observations on the part of Mr. Doublet were very sensible and true-spirited, and if he had ended there he would have deserved the name of a sober and thinking man, but in a moment he added, " Would to Heaven ! Mr. Clarion, our law-makers might re-establish the noble trial by combat !" The erudition of the smart showman was here sadly at fault and he was obliged to put two or three questions as to the character of this process, to Sol. Clarion, who replied that it was "a method of settling murders wherein the party accused of the homicide fell pell-mell with bare fists, case knife or other convenient weapon upon the next of kin to the deceased, and the next of kin fell pell-mell in a similar manner upon the party accused, and they belaboured and thrust at each other until one or the other's business accounts with this world were finally closed up and ledgered, and the party thus disposed of was held to have been

altogether in the wrong ; and thus you see" concluded Solomon, "the whole matter was settled without the expense of rope, judge or jury ; sheriff, gallows-tree or new breeches and bonnet to see the hanging in : the surviving combatant was fully satisfied, and the dead man never walked the earth at unseasonable hours !"

By the time this judicious explanation was ended the coach had halted opposite a pleasant yellow house with a slim round cupola stuck on its roof like a high-crowned Dutch hat, and a back door with a portico looking out into a cheerful graveyard. "I think this is the house," said Sol. Clarion to the driver, and a meagre friend of the driver's jumped from the box, knocked at the door and inquired if Doctor Nicholas Grim lived there ? At this a pretty, blushing face was thrust out of a second story window, smiled softly at Solomon, and replied that he did, and disappeared in great haste. Sol. Clarion and Will Robin, now dismounted, the former urging Counsellor Doublet to join them, who steadily refused, saying he must look after his mandamus at once ; the smart showman bowed and smirked, and set his slate-coloured game cock a-crowing—the driver cracked his whip over the ear of his near leader, and the stage coach whirled away. In a moment the door of the yellow house opened, and a healthy, fat man in a suit of black broadcloth, projected himself headlong almost into the arms of Sol. Clarion, exclaiming "My dear Sol.—is this you ! I am heartily glad to see you ! This is better than a new patient or even a consultation at the rich widow's. Why Sol. ! my dear fellow," shaking him by the hand again at arms' length, "you look pale ; a little fever occasioned by riding in the wind. Come in ! come in !" putting one arm about his waist and motioning towards the door, "oh ! here's your cousin Grace !" At this the proprietor of the pretty blushing face that was thrust out of the second story window came forward from behind a white pocket handkerchief, and extended her hand to Sol. Clarion, who received it with a similar demonstration, exclaiming (as he gave it a gentle pressure) "Ah ! Grace, you didn't visit poor Peth this year !"

And she, smiling archly upon Mr. Clarion, replied, "Oh ! Sol. I am glad I did not; for I imagine it has brought you down !" Then, streaks of crimson and deep red flushed all over her neck and brow, as if she thought she had said more than it was proper for a maiden to say, and at the first opportunity she glided silently away

leaving the discourse with Dr. Nicholas Grim and his worthy nephew.

Six short months had rolled around from this period, and Sol. Clarion was domiciliated with his good hearted uncle, taking the place and fulfilling the duties of an apothecary, who had been his uncle's former assistant, and who had unfortunately died of the fumes of a new pill he was on the eve of discovering only a week before Sol. Clarion's arrival. That journey of Sol's. had been undertaken in consequence of a letter from Dr. Nicholas, warmly tendering the situation, and Sol. Clarion had accepted it on condition that he should be allowed to bring Foolish Will with him, to serve prescriptions, use the pestle and mortar, and perform other simple services of a similar nature. Six pleasant months have slipped from the calendar, and now it becomes our duty, however painful, as faithful chroniclers, to open a strange and singular chapter in the history of the generous son of Æsculapius, in whose house our adventurer has found a cheerful home.

THE VISION OF DR. NICHOLAS GRIM.

CONTAINING THE CONCLUSION OF THE ADVENTURES OF SOL. CLARION.

> Titty and Tiffin, Suckin
> And Pidgen, Liard, and Robin!
> White spirits, black spirits, grey spirits, red spirits,
> Devil-toad, devil-ram, devil-cat, and devil-dam,
> Why Hoppo and Stadlin, Hellwain and Puckle!
> *The Witch:* a Tragi-Comedy, by Thos. Middleton.

THE pleasant yellow house of Dr. Nicholas Grim, with its slim, round cupola, stood in the skirts of the city. It was surrounded by a grassy door-yard, with a carriage gate opening into the road on one side, another gate leading into a well stocked garden in the rear, and a third, facing the northeast, giving access to an orchard which had been transformed into a place of burial. The dwelling with its appurtenances had formerly belonged to a dry, old curmudgeon, who had sold the fruit ground in question, for a handsome consideration, to an undertaker; reserving to himself, his heirs and devisees, a privilege through the orchard gate. The study of Dr. Nicholas Grim looked directly forth upon this graveyard, and, recollecting that not a few of his own patients were slumbering there, it is singular that the worthy practitioner had not chosen some other quarter of the building for his own use. Contemplating those little green hillocks and those peculiar, square-cut stones, unpleasant thoughts might arise in the bosom of Dr. Grim; particularly as it was hinted that the patients of Dr. Grim were allowed to enjoy the pleasure of that worthy Galen's acquaintance but a very short time after it was formed, and after he had administered his first prescription, and were forced by some urgent necessity to bid him an eternal farewell, and take their departure, post haste, for another world.

The truth is, that Dr. Nicholas, as fine hearted and jovial a man

as ever lived, was regarded by some people as an arrant quack and pretender. However this might be, Dr. Grim was, and boasted himself to be, the discoverer of that invaluable Catholicon—"The Patent Pioneer Pill." The ingenious inventor of this wonderful medicine never asserted that it could raise a man from the dead, by being administered to his corpse nine weeks after burial, nor that the cause of Methusalah's extraordinary longevity was the fact of his having taken a handful of the Patent Pioneer Pills in his coffee every morning at breakfast. But Dr. Nicholas Grim *did* profess that this astonishing pill could cure every shade and variety of disease; and that in effecting a cure it had a mode of operation peculiar to itself.

"The Patent Pioneer Pill," said the doctor one day to Sol. Clarion, with a grave and solemn face, in explanation of its properties, "descends into the stomach like an ordinary medical prescription or dose: when there, acted upon by the gastric juice, it loses its original shape and character and becomes metamorphosed into a small apothecary with a hard, granite complexion, that being, as you know, the original colour of the bolus, and a lilliputian medical scalpel or shovel in his hand. Armed with this instrument the little apothecary casts about the stomach to discover any impurities or obstructions that may there exist, and at once sets about removing them with said scalpel or shovel, into the great duct or canal—the rectum—which acting like a sewer carries it off. After having thus cleansed the grand chamber of the human body," continued Dr. Nicholas Grim, "the pill-apothecary commences travelling up the different alleys and by-ways of the system, fulfilling the part of a philanthropic reformer wherever he travels; applying suitable remedies while on the spot, (you see the advantages of this mode of practice, Solomon!) to scrofula, apoplexy, plethora, emaciation, dropsy, consumption, rheumatism and every other conceivable malady. So that by administering this renowned pill," concluded Dr. Grim, "we in fact despatch a pocket physician as it were, a kind of deputy, where we are unable to attend in person," (here I must confess something of a sly smile crept over the features of the celebrated inventor,) "on a tour of scientific investigation, through the human constitution; a miniature, medical Hercules to knock in the head any monster of a malady that dares to show itself. It was the proudest day of my life when I discovered the ingredients of the Patent Pioneer Pill!"

What was most singular notwithstanding the doctor's lucid and philosophical exposition of the character and operation of the Patent Pioneer Pill, its reception into the human stomach, was, in nineteen cases out of twenty, followed, as I have before suggested. by the speedy transfer of the recipient from his own snug fireside and comfortable suit of broadcloth or homespun, to a cold basement without windows under ground, and a disagreeable mahogany or cherry overcoat, furnished by that tailor to the corpse, a sexton. In other words, a large majority of the patients of Dr. Nicholas Grim died upon his hands: so that his little apothecary with the granite complexion who travelled interior must, as Sol. Clarion insinuated, have very often lost his way!

Now opens that strange chapter in the history of the doctor to which we have referred.

It was a pleasant, tranquil afternoon in the latter part of July. Over all the region within view of the white, round cupola of Dr. Grim, an unbroken silence hung. Within the house there was perfect calm; Sol. Clarion and Grace Grim were gone to the city in the Doctor's gig, and their laughing dialogue and cheerful tread were not heard as was wont. Will Robin was out rambling along the river, practising that merry device of his, of catching shrimps with a shot bag. Without, whatever there was of life, by its motionless silence, added to the perfect quiet of the scene. In his stable stood a plump, sleek, bay coloured nag, quietly whisking his tail, while a mouse—noiseless as a Pythagorean disciple in the first years of his pupilage—was foraging about the edge of the door on a few oat grains that had fallen from an overstocked bin above. A mottled cat, in glossy condition, sate couchant upon the half-opened stable door, looking down with an air of sleepy indifference, upon the careful little plunderer. In the door-yard the grass waved slowly, swayed by the lazy wind that just buoyed a thistle-down in the air, and prevented its falling too swiftly to the earth. At a little distance from the house might be heard the feeble tinkling of a brook, that earned its channel through the hard soil by slight, but steady labour. The sun was just disappearing in the west, and Dr. Nicholas Grim sate in his leather-backed armchair, in his study, with his feet resting upon a stool covered with a soft cushion of lamb's wool, indulging in the after dinner reverie of a corpulent man. As the sun's last ray came in at the window, it cast the shadow of the doctor's enormous bulk upon the opposite wall, where

it assumed a new and fantastic appearance every moment, as the angle at which the sunlight entered the apartment, varied. Now, his protuberant paunch, was thrown into bold relief, like the moon thrusting its portly front forth from a partial eclipse; now, as one side of the coat was brought into the picture, resembling a huge ship of war with her fore-sail spread; now the broad good natured countenance of the doctor was caricatured into a lion's head, or again into a long, thin, grotesque human face. Dusk crept in, and gave new touches to the picture; filling the room with odd shadows, and travestying the appearance and character of every object: a slim, wide-lipped vial, casting from the shelf upon the floor the likeness of a prim, tall quaker, with a broad-brim hat; a little gallipot assuming upon the wall the counterfeit presentment of an oily Dutchman, with a peaked nose, while said nose was, or seemed to be, fastened upon by the shadowy fingers of a pair of tweesers, hung up by a string. In the centre of the apartment stood a stout, circular stand from which a number of long-necked bottles, filled with medical preparations, towered up surrounded by a swarm of small vials and pill-boxes—flanked with a bowl of jelly, near which a fat faced watch, with a heavy gold chain and seals, lay, and indolently ticked the time. In another quarter stood an old fashioned book case, over the top of which a plaster-of-Paris Galen, and Æsculapius exhibited their dusty faces. The windows were hung with heavy curtains, and every other appointment of the room denoted competency and comfort. Not many minutes after the twilight had become tinged with the deeper colours of advancing night, a tread was heard in the hall—a muffled knock at the door, and as Dr. Grim exclaimed, "Come in!" the door opened slowly, a large man in stout boots, with a round-topped country hat entered, and bowing, with a smile, glided across the room, without any of that noise which might be expected to accompany the motion of so heavy a body, and silently took his station in an extreme corner, with his face turned toward Dr. Nicholas. The doctor recognized in this mysterious personage one of his own patients, and would have taken him kindly by the hand, had he not remembered that he had buried him about twelve months before. A second muffled knock was heard at the door; and a bold-faced man in green spectacles, another patient of Dr. Grim's, entered, crossed the apartment, and took his station quietly beside the first. Again the ominous sound was repeated, and a man with an oval face, joined the others. This

third apparition left the door standing ajar, the mysterious, muffled knock was heard no more, but there glided in, without notice or warning, a stream of some dozen or twenty ghost-like personages, in each one of whom Dr. Grim, who was rapidly turning into a vast petrefaction, discovered some recent patient that had been shot down by that fatal ball, the Patent Pioneer Pill. Amongst others he recognised a dapper bank clerk, who had signalized himself by having outlived double the number of that celebrated preparation of any person on record; and, horrid spectacle!—John Simple his late apothecary! What might be the purpose of this singular and voluntary visit, Dr. Nicholas Grim had not sufficient sagacity to conjecture. In a short time however, the bank clerk and the apothecary laid their ghostly heads together, and after a few minutes consultation, the bank clerk drew from his pocket a scroll of paper, and pondered over it about a second, the spare apothecary bustled about among the shadowy assembly and, at a nod from the bank clerk, the impudent man in green spectacles advanced from the throng.

"I commend these to thee as fresh!" said the impudent man seizing Dr. Nicholas by the nose with one hand, and opening his mouth, and thrusting down the contents of a large pill box with the other. The impudent man then adjusted his green spectacles and fell back into his place.

The nod of the bank clerk was repeated; and a personage built like a junk bottle, having a small head and long neck with a stout, round body and square shoulders—came forward and subjected the worthy physician to the identical operation of the impudent man in green glasses—and retired.

Next a doughty brewer with an immense fist stalked forth, and crushing the pill box with which he was furnished between two fingers, he filled his huge palm with its contents, and poured them with an asseveration down the doctor's throat, as if he was using a barley scoop.

"This must be dry work," said the first apparition that had entered, the large man in stout boots, and drawing from his side coat pocket a bottle of paregoric, he thrust the neck into the mouth of Dr. Grim, (who began to make awful contortions of face,) and giving the bottle a smart jerk, discharged the whole of the fluid into his stomach.

"I think I'll bag the balls this time!" said the fourth operator,

who had been a noted billiard player, shooting the contents of an enormous box into the open mouth of Dr. Grim.

"And I'll charge home!" said a fifth patient, formerly an artillery man, stepping out as the billiard player drew back, placing the contents of a similar box upon the tongue of the inventor of the Patent Pioneer Pill, and forcing them with his fingers down the overcharged throat of the doctor.

"What if I throw all the balls at once!" said a sixth, the keeper in his lifetime of a nine-pin alley, and he bowled a handful of pills by main force into the distended features of the terrified Dr. Grim.

Then a modest little man came forward and, like the stout countryman, moistened this dry provender with a second infusion of fluid from a bottle which he produced.

At length the bank clerk ceased giving nods, thrust his scroll into his pocket, and came forward himself, his skirts stuffed out to an almost horizontal position by the materials that were crammed into them.

"There's nothing like the Pioneer Pill, Dr. Grim!" said he with a horrid smirk upon his countenance, drawing from his pocket another of the awful chip boxes which disappeared in a trice, between the jaws of Dr. Nicholas; a second from the same source soon followed it; a third, a fourth, a fifth. At length even the inexhaustible pockets of the bank clerk were exhausted, and he turned to the apothecary for a fresh supply, and that worthy handed over to him some dozen boxes more; the last two or three stuck in the throat of the doctor, and the bank clerk was obliged to give him a smart punch in the bowels to open his larynx. The bank clerk now, with large drops of sweat on his pale brow, drew back, and John Simple advanced, with a grave, doctorial air, to take his place.

Baring the arm of Dr. Grim, he took him deliberately by the wrist, with thumb and finger, and gently feeling his pulse, said, "Dr. Nicholas, you appear to have something of a fever; your face is flushed too, and there appears to be a slight flutter in the region of the heart. I am afraid you are suffering from repletion; have you any nausea?" To this question Dr. Grim involuntarily shook his head, and Mr. John Simple proceeded. "I think we had better send down a box or two of our Patent Pioneer Pills; perhaps the little apothecary with his shovel may remove the obstruction or impurity."

Interchange of faces between Dr Grey & Will Belin.

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There was a gentle laugh among the assembled apparitions, and the same lively process of administering pills was carried into effect as the bank clerk had practised, the latter gentleman taking the position formerly occupied by Mr. Simple, and handing out innumerable boxes from some invisible reservoir.

As box after box followed each other rapidly into the capacious stomach of Dr. Grim, he might have thought, if thought was permitted to his awe-stricken mind, "What the devil! it can't be that that rascally apothecary, John Simple, is preparing the Patent Pioneer Pill, from my recipe, in the other place!—for exportation?"

Each one of the shadowy party had now administered in turn to the terrified Grim; and yet they seemed to think that the course was not quite complete, for huddling about the stand in the centre of the room, each one seized upon vial, powder-paper, or long-necked bottle, and despatched its contents after the drugs and fluids that had already travelled down the free highway of Dr. Grim's throat. The bowl of calves'-feet jelly was however quaffed off at a draught by the doughty brewer himself.

The apothecary, casting his eye upon the fat faced watch, exclaimed, "our time is up!" and, resuming their places, they glided out of the apartment in the same order and with the same silent tread as they had entered.

In a few minutes Foolish Will came in from practising his ingenious exploit by the river, and advancing cautiously into the study of Dr. Grim, he discovered that worthy practitioner with his feet spread out upon the floor, his hands clinging fast to the arms of his chair, and his face going through a series of singular and rapid changes, to which the rollicking motion of his whole body seemed to lend variety and vigour. Will Robin, as might be reasonably expected, thought that the doctor was playing off his countenance, in a sportive way, upon him, and unwilling to be outdone in so capital a diversion, he drew up a chair directly opposite Dr. Grim, and planting himself upon its edge, placed his hands upon his knees, and commenced reciprocating faces with that corpulent gentleman.

Some of the doctor's exhibitions were however so entirely original and astonishing, that they put at defiance Will Robin's Herculean efforts to rival them; and the doctor rolled his eyeballs in a manner so picturesque and expressive as to render every attempt to imitate their movements utterly fruitless. To these numerous and inimitable divertisements the doctor now began to add certain

indescribable motions of the hands, waving them in rapid curves toward the door, joining them significantly upon his stomach, and again brandishing both, first toward Will Robin, and then toward the hall. As they sate thus contemplating each other, and as Will began to suspect something more than amusement lay at the bottom of the matter, Sol. Clarion entered with his gig whip in his hand to greet the doctor, and communicate the result of his city visit, as to certain small messages that had been entrusted to him by Dr. Grim. As he drew near he discovered that something had gone wrong with the doctor in his absence, and instinctively seizing his pulse, and finding it to beat at an unusual rate, he begged the doctor to speak. But the doctor was silent as a stone.

"For God's sake," exclaimed Grace Grim, rushing into the room at that moment, from a brief conversation with Will Robin in the hall, "For God's sake what is the matter with my father?"

Dr. Grim smiled upon her faintly, but made no answer. He was carried to his bed, and there he lay sick for about two weeks, articulating not a word distinctly during that time, but mumbling over sometimes to himself, sometimes aloud, broken phrases from which the foregoing narrative was gathered. At the end of the time he died in an apoplectic fit, which seized him about mid-day. The third day after, he was buried, and the warm tears of two affectionate and simple mourners at least, wet the sod upon his grave.

And yet the world remains, although those whom we love and reverence are buried, and life must go on in its old courses after it has leaped the temporary obstruction—the pebble in its channel.

Obeying this wise though seemingly selfish instinct some twelve months after the death of Dr. Nicholas Grim, two fair beings in the youth of life stood up hand in hand, and before them a reverend man in sable garments likewise stood, and he pronounced before them a solemn form of words and—they were man and wife.

A week or two after his marriage with Grace Grim, Sol. Clarion received the following epistle by the hand of a country neighbour from the city of Peth, and as he perused it, he thought he heard each line ring with the peculiar nasal twang of its author.

GREENWICH, Connecticut.

Sixth Month, Second Day, 18—.

Friend Solomon:

IT grieveth me much to communicate by this, tidings that thine uncle is deceased. He departed this life on first day morning, of a malignant fever, as I am informed by Dr. Slanter, who attended him during his last sickness. His malady wrought much change in thine uncle's looks, as I can state from personal observance, having inspected them with great care immediately after his lamented decease. The funeral takes place third day morning, but too early for thee to come up; thou hadst better not undertake the journey, as it may overweary thee, thou being of a feeble constitution, (as I know) from a boy. Thine uncle hath left no heir, as thou knowest he was never in wedlock; consequently thou art his successor in the homestead, and whatsoever cash, moveables and stock he hath left. I would advise thee to plough the meadow behind the house, and to sow timothy in the blue grass meadow. The garden needs to be looked after, and the fruit trees, as they are at present well-stocked, should be thinned out. Perhaps I had better use the kitchen herbs and early apples for my own family use, until thou comest hither. My spouse Deborah says they make exceeding good pies. Zekiel can pluck them, and it will be no great trouble; if it be, a small commission will make all right between me and thee. Zekiel proposes to gather the vegetables and fruit for us in consideration of thy letting him have a little of the live stock; a pair or two of the fowls, and a well-looking calf that is just cast by the spotted cow. I regret to add that Gideon Barley's fine red heifer hath strained her off shoulder, and he may lose the crittur. I recommended salt and water for the animal; whether Gideon will use it yet is not decided. The old people are well and ask the stage-driver daily (as I have observed from the kitchen window) questions concerning thy welfare. I would bring this news to thee in person, and be enabled to satisfy thy grandfather and grandmother touching thy progress and behaviour in the Babylon where thou art, but there is much ploughing to be done, and I am deprived of Zephaniah's aid, he being sore of a foot with a scythe wound. Leonard hath gone over to tend the mill for miller Kirby, and Zekiel will be busy running to and fro betwixt us and thy garden and orchard. Advi-

sing thee to keep from the snares that beset the feet of youth in the ungodly city, and recommending thee to pay thy tailor's bill, and avoid the night air:

Thine,

URIAH BLOOM.

It is thought that Doublet, the old-fangled tory lawyer will not last the summer out. I have called upon him a score or so of times in a neighbourly way, and do verily believe that the old man hath lost his wits, for he ceases not to cry out for one Mand Hamus, a king's counsel I judge, from such words as he delivers with the name. However on this point I will inform thee further in a short time, as I intend to watch with him to-night, to see what further hints he may drop in his fever, touching this and other matters.

U. B.

Happening a short time after this in the neighbourhood of 9¼ Bowery, Sol. Clarion's eye was attracted by a gorgeous painting, exhibiting a great variety of monsters in fanciful colours, and observing the words "Wonderful Wild Beast Exhibition," he stepped in and asked for the proprietor, Mr. P. Hyaena Patchell. But Mr. Patchell came not forth. In answer to his inquiry, he learned that the smart showman had had his head bitten off by the famous Bengal lion, in an attempt to investigate the lungs and bronchia of that interesting animal, for the amusement of a very pleasant assemblage of apprentices, maid servants, children under thirteen at half price, and a musty medical gentleman, who was very curious to learn the physiological effect of a full grown man's placing his cranium within the jaws of a Bengal lion in robust health.

Counsellor Doublet he ascertained had bustled about the clerks offices for a day or two, and been laughed at by all the clerks and scriveners in the same; was told the Supreme Court no longer granted the writ of privilege—and returned to the country and took to his bed. By the next mail after that which brought the epistle of friend Bloom, he learned that the little lawyer had died over night, demanding a "mandamus writ of privilege!" in a voice of authority; and threatening an appeal to Parliament if it were not granted!

THE MELANCHOLY VAGABOND.

It was a clear October morning. The hum of the city was just beginning to swell into a distinct sound; the sun, like a cheerful face smiling from amid doubt and adversity, was pushing aside the clouds in the east, and exhibiting his broad, rubicund features in full glow and freshness; sloops, here and there, and other trim vessels were starting out from the shore, and gliding up or down the river; and in the middle of the stream two men occupied a weather-beaten, red fishing-boat, motionless and silent. One of them sate in the bows with his hands clenched upon his knees, and a wo-begone expression of countenance; and the other occupied the middle seat with an oar in each hand dipping in the water.

The first had a dry, shrivelled face, was short of stature, and was attired in a tattered grey overcoat, stretching from chin to heel, with a woollen cap, fashioned very much like a night cap, on his head. The second was a round, beef-fed personage, built like a duck, with an immense bill and corresponding mouth, and amply filled every inch of his garments with his person. He was clad in a long-tailed clay coloured coat, mud coloured vest, colourless pair of breeches, and dusty hat.

"Don't you feel any sort of a freshness from the morning air, Neddy?" asked the duck featured gentleman, pulling a stroke or two down the river.

"No, none at all, no how; there's something here Nosey," laying his right hand upon his heart, "a dead sickness I'm afeard that breeze nor physicianer can cure!" He then heaved a sigh, and joining his hands together again, exclaimed in a still more pathetic voice, "Ah! you knows not, Nosey Bellows, tho' you be's a father, what it is to have a ungrateful dau'ter! To have a girl what marries throw herself against her daddy's will."

"Per'aps, we'd better pull for the fishing ground Neddy," said

the duck faced man, " the sight of the cheerful porgies comin' up on the hook may sort o' revive you, and make you forget your suff'rins. A bit of Nature now and then is very pleasant to the spirits! Come," concluded the duck faced man, " we'll try a stroke for the Island!—what say you Neddy Budge?"

" Neddy Budge can't go Nosey, no how; you'd better pull to shore and land me, for somehow or other I always feels more melancholy on water. So I'll turn rudder," giving the tiller a turn feebly, " and go ashore and take a stroll along the banks!"

" Well if you will, you will!" said Mr. Bellows, drawing his oars smartly through the water, and the red boat shot swiftly toward land. In a few minutes they struck the shore, Budge jumped out, and Bellows turning again scudded down the river, took in another friend of his, and pointed prow for Governor's Island.

The history of Neddy Budge up to this period was simply this. He had opened life as a constable in a fifty dollar court. From his humble position on the floor of the court-room, clearing the bar and bawling 'to order!' he had, one lucky day, by a sudden change of parties and favour with political leaders, found his way to the Justice's seat, and there he presided for many years a legal dark-lantern, by whose uncertain and wavering light many an unfortunate plaintiff or defendant was plunged into a pit of costs. Again the wheel of fortune turned. Again he handled the marshal's truncheon for a time; but even that simple staff of authority was wrested from his hand, and he became an idle hanger-on upon the court, without business or profit; until the sweeper of the court-room died, and then, in consideration of his former luminous services on the bench, Neddy Budge was inducted into that modest office. He soon became a poor devil, and slipping rapidly through those nice gradations which are known only in low life, he settled into the character in which he has appeared before the reader, namely that of a vagabond fisherman.

After Neddy Budge had abandoned Bellows and his boat, he directed his steps along the shore indulging, as he walked a melancholy vein of thought and meditation.

" Who'd have thought it," said Neddy, torturing his face into an expression of refined suffering, " a girl as was bro't up so kindly—and so well edecated as Nancy—poor Nan!" and a small drop of fluid distilled from the eyes of the Melancholy Vagabond, " and then to marry sich a tripe! a mere dog-queller."—Here Mr. Budge's feel-

ings of indignation became too strong for oral expression, and he accordingly plucked his woollen cap from his brow and crushed and twisted it between his hands, until all semblance of its character as an ornament for the human head had entirely disappeared. "I can't stand it no how any longer," at length uttered Neddy Budge, stamping his foot fiercely on the ground, "I'll wring his neck off, and they may take the law of me! I don't care no how!—I'll choke him with soot afore he shall live with my daughter! Yes I will!" and the ferocious Budge doubled his fist and shook it in the air as if the powerful proposition he had just made had been assailed by some invisible casuist. Upon the delivery of this emphatic threat, Mr. Budge directed his steps with considerable speed toward the city. He had not walked many paces in this direction before he resumed his original course with more moderation, falling again into a strain of dolorous reflection.

"But I han't the spirit to murder a man tho' he be a dog-killer, and as helpless and feeble as a puppy just whelped. If he'd have been a rag-picker, or a horse-doctor, or a master chimley-sweep, or any sort of a thing but a dog-killer, Neddy Budge could have stood it. But then he's a despisable murtherer of poor curs! and knocks 'em in the head for the corporation, a dollar a-piece. I hope Nancy 'll starve afore she eats bread earned by sich practices!"

As he uttered these words, with his eyes cast sadly upon the ground, a laughing fellow with a crimson complexion slapped Neddy Budge heartily upon the shoulder.

This worthy was a jolly constable, a former companion of Budge's, and always known and addressed as "William." And here kind reader, allow me to drop a pithy apothegm, founded on much observation and experience. There is a class of persons whose full name is as difficult to get at as to discover the longitude, or the meaning of a Hebrew commentator. They are known simply as Johnson, or Hodges, or Smith; or as John, Bob, Philip, or Dick. Hostlers, coachmen, negroes, errand-boys, constables, and park-keepers are generally known in this way. They seem to constitute a kind of half-humanity, which is sufficiently honoured and recognised by a single appellative. Why clergymen are put to the inconvenience of christening them into full names is a mystery I could never fathom.

"Good morning, Judge!" said the jolly constable, touching his

hat with a mock air of profound reverence, as Neddy Budge looked up, "How does your honour feel this morning?"

"Miserable, William, miserable. I'm in sich low spirits, and have sich a ringing in my head I can't hardly live."

"Why how is this, Neddy?" continued the jolly constable, "your mind ought to be as light as a lark now; you've got no cases to try, no juries to panel"—

"You say true William," interposed the Melancholy Vagabond, "but I'm afeard a jury 'll be panelled on me afore long that will give in a final verdict; and my case will be tried beyond appeals to higher courts!" And the Melancholy Vagabond let fall a tear upon his coat sleeve.

Hereupon the jolly constable looked very solemn, and said, Neddy Budge, you didn't use to be this way in the Old Court; there Justice Budge was as laughing a fellow as ever sate on the bench. Don't you recollect," he concluded, smiling and nudging Mr. Budge under the small ribs, "the case of Wright *vs.* Passnips, where you threatened one of defendant's witnesses if he didn't stop snivelling in court you'd send him up to the Dry Dock to be new caulked!" Upon the delivery of this funny reminiscence the jolly constable exploded in a horse-laugh, which, however, produced only a sickly smile upon the countenance of ex-justice Budge. At this Catchpole was slightly disconcerted, and, shaking Neddy hastily by the hand, hurried off to court, saying, he "must take out a fresh sunmons in the case of the huckster-woman, who always puts her head out of the garret window, saying, she's just gone out of town!"

Neddy Budge thereupon seized his woollen cap by the top, gave it two or three uneasy turns upon his head, settled it with a new part in front, and plunging both hands in his deep coat pockets, proceeded on his way more thoughtful and melancholy than ever.

The gloom which now pervaded the bosom of Mr. Budge had been gathering over it for more than a twelvemonth. It had at length become insupportable. The poor fellow as he now travelled along, (keeping the river in view,) burst forth at times with some heavy passage of complaining, or sitting down upon the stump of a tree, a rock or any chance object, wrung his hands and indulged in a copious discharge of tears. The man's only and darling daughter had married a dog-killer! Thus Neddy Budge rambled about the whole morning, sometimes keeping along the road, but oftener

straggling through the fields or along the shore. At length he formed a desperate resolve. He had reached an old deserted granary, standing near the river, with a door, over which swung a rusty iron crane, looking forth upon the water. Into this Neddy Budge easily made an entrance. For a long time he seemed to be searching about the building for some object in vain. At length discovering a stout piece of cord his object seemed to be attained, and forming one end of the same into a noose, he proceeded calmly and thoughtfully into the upper story of the granary. Here he threw open the door, drew in the crane and attached to its extremity one end of the rope. In a moment the other end was about his own neck, he had given the crane an outward swing, and Neddy Budge hung dangling in the air!

Nosey Bellows his companion of the morning had been unsuccessful in his fishing venture at Governor's Island, and had glided up the river, and dropped anchor off the Long Island shore, opposite the very building from which Neddy Budge had just thrown himself. He was sitting on the landward side of the boat, with his line carelessly dipping in the water, and looking over towards the City. The sun was sunken low in the west, and brought out the object upon which his gaze was now fastened, with great distinctness against the sky.

"As sure as a fish is a water animal," exclaimed the duck featured gentleman to his friend in the boat, "There's a man hanging from Astor's old granary by the neck!"

At this his friend turned and looking in the direction to which he pointed, replied, "Poh! Nosey—it's nothing but a sack of wheat that they're swinging in or a sheaf of straw!" and, looking more earnestly he seemed to doubt something the report of his own vision.

"Sheaf of straw nor sack of wheat has passed that door or hung on that crane this twenty year. Never sin' the dead pedlar was found in the loft. I'm sure its a man, and more we'll pull over and cut him down; there may be some snuff o' life in him yet."

Instantly they took in their lines and anchor, and, each seizing an oar, they pulled with main and might, straight across the river. As they drew nearer, Bellows observing the long grey overcoat, exclaimed, "It's Neddy Budge as I live!" and he threw greater strength into every stroke. They soon landed, and both ran at full speed toward the old granary. In a moment they drew in the crane, but finding him stone cold, the duck featured gentle-

man remarked with some trepidation in his accent, "That it would'nt do to cut him down till the crowner came. It was agin the law!—So I've heard poor Neddy himself say many a time!"

Nosey Bellows soon despatched his friend in quest of that functionary, and, allowing the body of Neddy Budge to swing back to its original position, he descended below stairs and stood underneath the crane looking up, with singular expression of visnomy, into the shrivelled face of his deceased friend. He was there joined by a second party, namely, the jolly constable who had come that way to try the inaccessible huckster, (who lived near by) with a "fresh summons."

They now observed, for the first time, together, that Neddy Budge held his woollen cap in his hand, which was extended forward as if in the act of tossing the article from him, when it was arrested by the death-pang. The philosophy of neither could solve this mysterious position of the dexter arm, and there they stood wondering until the coroner arrived. He very speedily summoned a jury, (with the aid of the constable,) from the neighbourhood; who, hearing the testimony of Nosey Bellows and jolly William, as to his morning's conversation with each of them, rendered the verdict, "died of his own act, in consequence of melancholy and depression of spirits." The jolly constable thereupon departed in search of the ingenious huckster; the body of Neddy Budge was lifted into the red fishing-boat, and Nosey Bellows and his friend rowed sorrowfully down the stream. The next day the Melancholy Vagabond was buried!

The Exit of the Melancholy Vagabond.

THE MERRY-MAKERS. EXPLOIT No. I.

THE MERRY-MAKERS IN QUEST OF A DINNER; AND THE COSTUME IN WHICH THEY INTRODUCED THEMSELVES TO CHICKEN PIE AND CIDER.

EVERYWHERE, all over the face of the earth are scattered like dimples, crews and companies of droll fellows, to keep the world in humour, and preserve the arts of laughter and frolic from total oblivion. Here and there some two or three of them will obtain a foothold, and practising their mad pranks, and uttering their witty sayings, make whole counties and townships ring with the echo. These are your wild blades, roaring boys, with something of the goosecap, something of the swaggerer in their composition, whose exploits are part of the history, and their mirthful speeches part of the vernacular of country villages and neighbourhoods. In the chronicles and traditions of such places they fill the posts of Robin Hoods and court jesters; every old woman in a cap, takes their fame into keeping, and it is handed down from chimney corner to chimney corner, sometimes even as far as the third generation! God bless the jovial tribe! for they have saved many a good face from becoming mouldy and wrinkled, and sent a cheerful ray down into many a fine heart that would otherwise have become dull and torpid.

Some thirty miles from the good city of New York, a pleasant road winds through the bosom of a cheerful range of low hills, covered all the way with rich woods and pasture lands. In the very heart of these hills stood a dilapidated and ancient outhouse, in which were assembled early on a clear, midsummer morning some six or eight laughing fellows, shabbily dressed, and engaged in earnest conversation.

"Well, my lads!" said one of them, a good sized man in a hawk nose, "I think we had better forego the project of tapping uncle Aaron's cider barrels to day. The liquor will be better a month

or two hence. I have a better game to propose that I think you'll like to have a hand in."

"What is it Bobbylink? Let us have it!" was the general acclamation and question of the party as they gathered eagerly about the speaker.

"As many as would as leave as not have clean rigging and a hot dinner to day, will please to not keep their mouths shut!" and a universal "amen!" burst from the throat of the persons assembled.

"If so," continued the speaker, who seemed to be master of the revels, "report yourselves and your condition as I call your names."

Saying this, he drew a dirty piece of paper from his hat and called, "Habbakkuk Viol."

"Here: breeches open as Deacon Barker's mouth when he's praying: coat with tails fighting agin each other, and suing for separation; shirt turned into ribbons, and gone into boots which are on a visit to the cobbler's. Belly in a state of insurrection."

"John Smally."

"On the spot, Sir, and has a faint recollection of a breakfast he eat 'bout a month ago; believes there was such a meal as dinner once in vogue in these parts. Garments similar-like to Mr. Viol's."

"Sam. Chisel."

"Your sarvant!" said a stout built fellow with a slight hump on his shoulders, throwing a somerset and lighting in front of Mr. Bobbylink, with a solemn expression of face. "Has attended three house raisin's; two weddin's and one christenin', come off with a dry belly from all six. For why? One man fell down dead wid an opoplexy, the furst mug of cider he swallered; 'cordingly the barrels was all spiked for fear of fudder accidents; the other two raisin's was on the rock crystal, cold water plan; the baby at the christenin' was too small herself for to eat, 'cordingly they giv' nothin', out; the two weddin's was over when I got there—'cause why? 'Bak Viol told me the wrong hour."

"That will do, Mr. Chisel" said the good sized man. "Fall in with Smally there, and save your stories for next twenty-first of June."

"Harry Harvest."

"Overcoat in good condition. Hat, coat, breeches and breakfast missing."

After these, two or three very similar personages gave corresponding responses and the roll call was completed.

"Follow me my lads !" said Mr. Bobbylink taking up the line of march toward a crumbling old-fashioned building, of which the outhouse was an appurtenance. The edifice which they now approached had been unoccupied and gradually falling into decay for several years. The owner of the lands on which it stood had erected a new tenement on a different part of his farm, and abandoned this to bats and owls and such companions of owls as Mr. Bobbylink and his club of wild fellows.

There was a part of the building however, into which even these dare-devils were afraid to intrude, and that was an upper chamber which was said to be tenanted by the ghost of a Jew who had died there at the close of the last century. In that room it was currently rumoured that the spirit of the Hebrew kept bachelor's chambers in a very ghostly manner; taking his meals, clinking and counting his silver and retiring to bed with all the regularity of a gentleman in the flesh. To confirm this state of things, Mr. Sam. Chisel said that he had seen a man in a thin face and Roman nose stand at the window several times " atween daylight and dark, his hand stroking a dry tuft of whisker, like a goat." And Habbakkuk Viol, asserted on his own personal hopes of salvation that he had heard a graveyard voice distinctly enunciate when Joshua Jolton, Esquire, was ringing his barrow shoats, " Dem those shwine !" Into this chamber notwithstanding the terrors which guarded it, Bob Bobbylink now boldly advanced followed by Smally, Chisel, Viol and their compatriots, in a state of considerable trepidation and paleness.

" Yesterday afternoon," said Bob Bobbylink, in explanation of this sudden intrusion into the haunted apartment, " I was crossing the open garret in search of an old firelock : all at once the casement of the north window rattled, one of the window frames fell out and a gust came roaring through the building—swept my hat from my head ; the little Jew's door burst open, through rolled my hat, and I stood shivering, bareheaded, in the wind. In a trice, however, I was filled with huge promptings of valour and adventure, and pushed forward toward the little Jew's bed-chamber. I found nothing but an old high-backed chair, a bedstead with the cords mouldered to pieces, and this black clothes-press standing against the wall. The little Jew had quit the premises, and as I was the first one to make a voyage into these unknown parts, I claim a right in all that is found as first discoverer. I searched

diligently my good fellows, every nook and cranny of the room, for cash and hard silver, and to my utter astonishment found not a farthing. Nevertheless, I have fallen upon something that if it be well managed will purchase a prime dinner for us for to-day at least." At the conclusion of this brief narrative, Mr. Bobbylink advanced to the clothes press, turned a rusty key in the lock, and the doors flew open and disclosed to the staring eyes of the party a great number of curious dresses, carefully folded up and laid in order on the shelves, interlarded here and there with old fashioned swords, matchlocks and pistols.

"I don't see how a dinner is to come out of this," said Habbakkuk Viol, after gazing upon the apparel a reasonable length of time. "Unless, Bob, you propose to feed us like ostriches, on rags and iron. Jack Smally here hath a stomach I doubt not, that would digest one of those antediluvian matchlocks for a breakfast, and despatch a pair of those odd-looking pistols between meals. Otherwise I see no meal nor mutton in a case of old clothes."

"Poh!" retorted Bobbylink, with an air of hearty disdain, "Viol, you see nothing but that which is plainly before your eyes; yea, and it must come somewhat in contact with your nose before you can thoroughly smell out its meaning."

"I agree with Viol," interposed Mr. John Smally, "I see no purpose to which you can put these fantastic dresses unless it be to peddle them at the weaver's a penny a pound, and the works on the fire arms for old iron a penny and a half."

"You are a pretty fellow, Johny Smally," replied Bob Bobbylink, with an air of still greater superiority than he had adopted towards Viol, "a pretty fellow indeed, to tell what use may be made of these instruments. Your conceits, Smally, are parcel of your brain—patchwork and rusty. Your skull is quilted with the very odds and ends of your grandmother's rag box; stuffed like an old saddle with tow and feathers"—

Mr. Bobbylink would have prolonged his reprimand had he not at this moment cast his eye upon John Smally, who hung his head, played with the fragment of a jacket-button, and exhibited other indisputable signs of penitence and contrition.

Now it should be understood that the shirtless Smally was the factotum, humble servant and parasite of Robert Bobbylink; that he had discovered at a very early period of life, that Mr. Bobbylink possessed the finest pair of skirts of any gentleman of his acquaint-

ance, that he had attached himself to said skirts very shortly after such discovery, and had clung to the same up to the present period, with the tenacity of a genuine mastiff. He accordingly made it his special business to circulate Mr. Bobbylink's jocose sayings far and wide; to repeat his stories with the prefix, "Mr. Bobbylink said," at all the convenient inns and public places within a dozen miles' walk; and to perform similar other small duties which a vassal should of right render unto his liege lord. He was Bob Bobbylink's humble shadow. If Bob expanded into importance, Mr. Smally felt it his duty to dilate in a corresponding manner; if Mr. Bobbylink at any time, from the force of circumstances or detection in some prank or project, was made to look dwarfish, John Smally, according to the charter by which he lived, was forced to look as small as a grasshopper. From all these causes a rebuke from Mr. Bobbylink was no less than a thunder-clap to the ears of Mr. Smally, and he was profoundly hushed and silent until it rumbled by; though he had wit at will against any other antagonist than his patron.

"Gentlemen and good fellows," continued Bob Bobbylink, "east of this building, about five miles, a wedding takes place this morning; the wedding dinner will be on the table at one o'clock, precisely. I propose that *we* eat *that* dinner. We shall entitle ourselves to the poultry, vegetables, boiled tongue, and apple sauce, which will figure there, by right of a device that I will open to you, if you will be quiet, just three minutes and a quarter." At this passage of his address a solemn tranquillity rested over the apartment. "I have examined this wardrobe carefully, and with an eye to our project. I find a suit of the little Jew's, including the tall blue cap, and long blue coat in which he was so well known in these parts; that, I shall don myself; a ghost may do something for flesh and blood sometimes. Here also is the dress of a Hessian horseman, and as old aunt Anderson, (who says she lost an ear by a trooper's blade during the old war,) will be at the wedding, she will undoubtedly aid us a little with her owl's voice when we appear. Habbakkuk, you have something of a ruffian trooper's air; may you not browbeat a passage to a dinner with the butt-end of this blunderbuss," (producing a rusty article of that description from a drawer of the clothes press,) "Let the others," he concluded, "fall in our rear, properly caparisoned, and all is safe. If clowns and boors can withstand the ghost of a Jew, and the blunderbuss of a mad

Hessian, there is more sustenance in beans and buttermilk than I have dreamed of!"

The old building echoed with a hearty shout as Bob Bobbylink ended, and under his direction they speedily doffed their ragged dresses and set about accoutering themselves in the new equipments thus aptly and unexpectedly furnished. The articles forming an entire and complete suit, were luckily found carefully pinned together, and this rendered the task comparatively easy and brief. Besides mere garments they discovered wigs, boots, fire-arms, swords, guns, &c., all of which might be rendered of service in the approaching exploit.

"While I was rumaging a private corner of the press," said Bobbylink as he produced the habiliments, "I fell upon a history of the queer little Jew, written by his own hand in a parchment book; from which it appears that he was originally an old-clothesman in England; after a while like a grub he turned from that calling into an anti'kary and dress-fancier, which you see is only a better sort of an old-clothesman; following up this sort of a profession, he gathered wherever he travelled the rarest and most curious kinds of dress and armour; guns, carbines, muskets, dragons, as he calls 'em. He says at one time he was accused of having stolen a couple of dresses from a nobleman's collection, but this he stoutly denies, in the name of father Abram, Isaac and Jacob. Finally, he came over to this country, about the year seventeen thirty-five; lived in the City a great many years, and at last came out to these parts, during the revolutionary war, and added a little to his wardrobe;—there his parchment book breaks off—and I conclude about the year eighteen hundred he turned from a dress-fancier into a ghost."

In the course of two or three hours the party was completely apparelled and defiled from the old bed-chamber, in the following order. First, Mr. Robert Bobbylink gravely stalked forth in the guise of the defunct Israelite, which consisted of the tall blue cap and long blue coat already mentioned, the latter being ornamented with hieroglyphic buttons; beneath it a rich white silk vest, with gay figures and devices; black pantaloons which from their brevity seemed to exhibit a reluctance to join a pair of low shoes, surmounted by two lively buckles of brass. In his hand Mr. Bobbylink bore a maple cane, the property and customary travelling com-

panion of the deceased gentleman whom he represented. It was with intense difficulty that Bob Bobbylink forced himself into these garments, which were about three sizes too small for his person, and he was obliged to chalk his face freely to take down the colour and give it something of the paleness which is proper and decent for a ghost.

Next to him, in order, marched Habbakkuk Viol, wearing upon his brow a ferocious helmet of jacked leather, guarded by rusty steel hoops; on his broad-shouldered back, he bore a long-waisted fiery red coat, with fierce metal buttons; his nether limbs were snugly encased in shamoy leather breeches, of an indescribable complexion, the lower extremities of which disappeared in a couple of heavy boots, enlivened at the rear with a pair of jingling iron spurs. Over his breast, in a leathern belt, an open-mouthed blunderbuss swung, sustained at one end by his right hand, at its muzzle by his left.

Behind him, slowly and thoughtfully waddled along the redoubted John Smally; clad in a broad-skirted Dutch coat, with awful cuffs; legs buried in trunk hose, which swelled above and beneath the knee into separate inflations, ending in peaked shoes that cut the ground like scythes; upon his head sate a jaunty cocked hat, from beneath which a brown queue streamed like the tail of a kite or a comet. In his hand he sustained, (terrible anachronism!) a dragon pistol as old as the age of Elizabeth;—an old fashioned weapon with a long handle, its works in the centre, and the ornament of a dragon's head at its muzzle. Having three dresses underneath his outer one, Mr. Smally moved with great solemnity and slowness, and indulged at times in singular expressions of visnomy, and strange gesticulations of the body.

Treading close upon the heels of Smally, came Sam. Chisel. How can I (unless in truth inspired) describe the jovial figure that now sidled through the chamber door. Stuffed monster! Elephant in broadcloth! balloon that hast taken two taper legs, dancing inflated on the earth! Mr. Samuel Chisel was endued on the present occasion in the habiliments of a famous clown, who had cast his clothes in the city of New York, during the war; thrown aside his cap and bauble, and, in fine, sold out his wardrobe to the little Jew antiquary. Upon his brow then Sam. Chisel wore a singularly constructed hat, having a towering steeple of felt for its centre, with a small white feather peeping from its point, and two flaming

angles of painted pasteboard for its sides. The steeple was garnished with innumerable glittering spangles, and yards of gold cord coiling about it to its very spire, and from one angle hung a silken tassel of considerable size, in peril every moment of being devoured by a monstrous painted lion, rampant on the neighbouring pasteboard corner, with his mouth agape. Around the base of this triple hat a lively belt was fastened by an immense pewter buckle; and from beneath the whole a red wig depended under cover of a linen bag, which was adorned with a portentous purple rose, or swinging cabbage plant. The hump of Mr. Chisel reposed beneath a brilliant green jacket, adorned down its whole front by vast wooden buttons, painted white, which held it closely fastened to the breast. This was stuffed out to portly dimensions, by the aid of three goodly sheaves of straw, that had been stowed into their place by the united strength of Viol, Bobbylink, and Harvest. The same favour had been likewise conferred on a pair of black silk breeches, whose extremities however tapered off so unexpectedly at the bottom, as to make it seem that Mr. Chisel had lost the best part of his legs in some hot engagement, and was walking upon segments or slices of the same. Nevertheless, immense buckles denoted the place where knees should have been, and a huge pair of jack-boots that threatened to swallow Mr. Chisel's whole person, monstrous as it was, were the only positive evidences of such members that could be discovered. In the neighbourhood of the knee-buckles, long knots of yellow ribbon, curled about his person like a nest of playful garter-snakes, and at the heels of the huge jack-boots two spurs, with rowels somewhat less than small coach-wheels, thrust themselves forth. Under his right arm the valiant Chisel sustained an awful two handed sword, (fabricated of lath, and painted the colour of steel,) with a green grip; and at his left side a gaping scabbard of calfskin dangled as he walked.

After Mr. Chisel, at a humble distance, and bearing about the same relation to him as a lean, starveling sexton following at the heels of a round-bellied, well-kept rector, came a withered little man, christened Tommy Snipe, by his parents, but re-baptized by the vulgar, Dried Snipe. This gentleman possessed a paper face, with a thin nose, that very unjustly inclined to the right ear, and a person which might be reasonably expected to correspond with such promising upper features. He took upon himself the task and burden of personating the age of George II.; wearing a dark

brown pig-tail, a wide-skirted coat, reaching to the knee, with ruffles at the wrist; a long vest with large pocket-flaps underneath, and snug pantaloons ending in pumps, adorned with knots of ribbon. But he was sadly out in his costume, by mounting on his head a sugar-loaf hat, and bearing in his hand a clumsy old pistol, managed by a wheelock, with its works all at the muzzle; like the brains of a garrulous fellow, that all lie in his tongue. I doubt whether the throats of those old iron orators ever spoke to much purpose. Into one of his coat pockets he slily insinuated a half-filled power-flask and shot-pouch, for the purpose, perhaps, of practising with his resuscitated pistol, upon a few of Mr. Joshua Jolton's tame pigeons, on the way home, if the adventure should chance to miscarry.

Behind Mr. Snipe, Harry Harvest strutted the ambitious representative of a still earlier reign. His head was covered with a low, broad-brimmed beaver, cocked on one side, one corner of which had been knocked out by a roundhead broadsword, with a dull, dirty feather winding about its crown. The expressive countenance of Mr. Harvest shone out from amid a fertile perriwig that flowed in a complete torrent of hair down his shoulders, like the man in the moon in a cloudy night. In his left hand he wore a smart sword, crossing a gay doublet, reaching to the top of a pair of wide stockings, tagged up with points: a set of petticoat breeches, and a few yards of lutestring completed the dress.

Thus accoutred, they glided noiselessly from the old building, and stole around a ledge of rocks, into a green lane, which was shaded by trees and straggled along the margin of a brook for something like a furlong. Here the pleasant by-way ended, and they found themselves in the edge of an oak forest, pursuing an obscure footpath, which sometimes broadened into an open space, and again narrowed to a track scarcely sufficient for the passage of Mr. Samuel Chisel.

As they travelled, the journey was lightened by occasional extravagantly authentic stories, narrated to the worthy just named, by Bob Bobbylink—interspersed now and then, with a rough cudgel-play of wits between Dried Snipe and Hank Harvest; enlivened still more at intervals, by a series of mutual tricks, practised upon each other all round. At times Habbakkuk Viol, the mad Hessian, would discover as he stooped to drink of some passing stream, an ominous goose-quill stuck in his jacked leather helmet, vying with

his more regular trooper's feather. Again a rapid series of sudden and invisible kicks would descend upon the swelling flank of Sam. Chisel, with such velocity and fury, as to shake his physical commonwealth to its centre. Dried Snipe being a tetchy little fellow, was frequently set upon and sorely badgered by some one of the party.

"I think," said the gentleman who represented the seventeenth century on this occasion, addressing himself to Tommy Snipe, "when I undertook to rob a henroost, I wouldn't mistake a patriarchal cock, for a maiden pullet; you are so valiant Snipe, you should have known him by his spurs!"

"I knows what I know," retorted Mr. Snipe. "If it had been you, I might have known you to be a tender bird by your soft coxcomb!"

"Well answered, Dried Snipe!" quoth the company halting in a cleared space, and gathering about the disputants; (Bobbylink advancing alone on a lookout.) Quip and reply now rapidly passed between the contending parties, until at length the tetchy Mr. Snipe was exasperated beyond endurance, by Harry Harvest's alluding to his features, in connexion with the appearance presented by the physiognomy of a dried codfish suddenly animated. At this unsavory and pointed insinuation the gentleman representing the middle of the eighteenth century, in his style of dress, grew exceeding wroth, and would have done terrible damage to the person and habiliments of him of the seventeenth, by drawing from his pocket his small powder-flask, and proceeding to load his venerable pistol, had not fate interposed, and by the hand of John Smally, forcibly plucked the brown wig from the head of the valorous Snipe: whereupon his sugar-loaf hat slid over his face, very much like an enormous extinguisher. In this tomb his valour was effectually buried for the present. Meantime Mr. Harry Harvest had drawn his trusty rapier, but was prevented from a very dexterous employment of the same, by the sudden descent of Sam. Chisel's trenchant blade of lath upon his head, which caused his eyes to emit sufficient sparks and flashes, to fire a whole field of artillery.

And now the gentlemen of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were completely at the mercy of their more modern comrades, and might have been speedily put to death by the numerous ingenious tortures practised upon them, while thus doing penance in the dark, had not Bob Bobbylink at that moment returned, exclaiming,

with sparkling eyes, "the signal is hove out!" which being readily understood by the party, caused a supple adjustment of all difficulties, a general and generous forgiveness of injuries, and they re sumed the march.

In a moment or two they had emerged from the woods, and cast ing their eyes toward the east, discovered a long stripe of red flannel flying at the head of a well-pole. The sight of this signal inspired the freebooting varlets with feelings similar to those which filled the breast of the adventurous Vasco de Gama, on obtaining the first view of the Pacific from a peak of the Andes; for to Viol, Bobbylink & Co., it opened visions of whole seas of cider, and mountains of mutton and roast beef. They had now arrived in an orchard at the rear of the dwelling, whose roof covered the wedding-dinner, which was the grand object of their adventure, and the wedding-party had just seated themselves at the table to do justice to its various excellence. While the dinner-hunters are discussing the most expedient order of entrance and assault, we will appropriate a few words of description to the objects we have mentioned.

At the head of a long table, then, in a comfortable sitting room, looking out upon a garden, was seated a round-faced, short man, in a new brown coat, with light brass buttons, and at his side, a red-cheeked, dumpy girl, in a new pink frock, and a pair of blue eyes, in capital order. At the opposite extremity of the board sate two aged females, old Aunt Anderson, the grandmother of the bride-groom, and at her left, Aunt Frewell Tomkins, the corresponding relative of the bride. Along the sides of the table were seated Parson Hob, a methodist clergyman, in an ill-cut suit of black, in the centre, with the mothers of the bride and groom, and two or three rustic female cousins, as wings; opposite the preacher sate the bride and bridegroom's grandfathers, flanked in like manner on each side with the male parents of the interesting couple, whose individual interests had been merged in a co-partnership for life, with a like number of male cousins to tally with the females mentioned. This interesting company had just arranged itself as we have described about a well-filled board when a loud knock was heard at the door, and without further warning, a man with an iron-bound military cap on his head, and a heavy blunderbuss in his hand, stepped into the apartment.

He grounded his arms with a martial air, and leaning over the muzzle looked around upon the wedding party with great coolness

and severity of countenance. The first one to speak on the appearance of this unexpected figure was Aunt Anderson—" My God !" said she, " I believe it's a Hessian !" And suddenly seizing her spectacles from the table and placing them to her eyes she shrieked " It is ! yes it is one of those wild war-fellows of the Revolution !" and dropping her glasses upon the floor she rushed precipitately out of the room.

By this time a second figure had made itself visible, this was a pale, sepulchral personage in a blue cap and coat, who tottered feebly into the apartment with a cane in his hand and took his station a little in advance of the military apparition. " Good gracious !" now shrieked Hetty Steddle, a pretty servant-girl who was in waiting, " Lor' bless me, if that ben't the ghost of old Shekkels !" and with a hideous noise she followed the example of withered Aunt Anderson. " It must be the spirit of the old Jew Shekkels !" said the two old grandfathers almost in the same breath, rising from the table placing their hands upon the cloth and peering anxiously forward into the face of the man in the blue coat and cap. A general panic had now seized the company ; the dumpy bride had succeeded, after two or three ineffectual attempts, in fainting, and was borne in the arms of the short man in the round-face, aided by two or three stout boors, into the fresh air. The clergyman had taken advantage of the open door and suddenly disappeared, none could tell (if they had cared) whither. The females in a body fled the haunted table, followed by the bridegroom's father between the two venerable grandsires, dragging them out by the collar with main force. Just as the last one of this fugitive party of weddeners had vanished through one door their places were supplied at another by our friends, Sam. Chisel, Harvest, Snipe, and Smally, who were equally disposed, with them, to do justice to the yet untasted meal before them. First, the Merry-Makers, then, indulged, in a sort of subdued horse-laugh all round. Next, the door was secured by John Smally and Sam. Chisel with two short bayonets thrust an inch deep or more in the lintels ; and then they arrayed themselves with all despatch about the smoking board.

According to an ancient custom that prevails in that region, the wedding company had established themselves at the table before the knives and forks were laid at the plates : that being a service generally rendered by a negro or maid-servant immediately after

grace. Our bold adventurers accordingly found themselves sadly at a stand for lack of these indispensables; all except Mr. Harry Harvest, who plied his rapier of the middle of the seventeenth century with great dexterity at the ribs of a roasted turkey, and Mr. Chisel whose lath sword did serviceable execution upon pudding and apple-sauce, shovelling huge streams of the latter down his throat seasoned with a draught from a neighbouring cider pitcher But the exploits of these two trenchermen scarcely satisfied the clamorous bellies of Dried Snipe, Smally, Habbakkuk Viol, and Bob Bobbylink.

The latter worthy therefore, rising and catching a brace of fine broiled woodcocks by the legs and thrusting them into his coat pocket, exclaimed—" Clear the deck my lads!—we'll adjourn the dinner to Head Quarters!" and saying this he seized upon two bottles of currant wine, and a fat fowl, and thrust them into a long bag (that he had secretly brought with him) to show them what he meant.

Thereupon a scene of awful and indiscriminate pillage ensued. Habbakkuk Viol, first filled his blunderbuss with cider to the muzzle plugging it in with a roll of hot bread, and afterwards stuffed a duck into either pocket. Sam. Chisel next cast out two sheaves of straw from his bosom and basted his green jacket with a monstrous chicken pie, a dish of apple sauce, and a leaden-covered pitcher of fresh-brewed ale; filling the steeple of his hat with hot rolls and other dainties; his jack boots with radishes and roasted apples, and his calf-skin scabbard with pudding sauce and drawn butter. An enormous turkey was severed and shared with Dried Snipe, who, besides this moiety, lined his gabardine with bread and cakes, and clapped a blackberry pudding in his sugar-loaf hat with a small plate at bottom to sustain it. The immense vestpockets of John Smally were forthwith freighted each with a comely loaf of pot cheese and into the skirts of his Dutch coat he slid a goodly tongue whispering to Bobbylink—" This, you and I will secretly divide!" As for Harry Harvest, he was desperately fond of greens, and took charge of the vegetable department and accordingly crammed his Charles Second doublet and petticoat-breeches between the lining, with beans, peas, asparagus, and ears of early corn. Thus armed and provisioned, these gallant cruisers cautiously undid the door and stole warily from harbour without being seen; for the whole wedding party had fled into the crib, which was on the other side

of the house, and there they kept themselves in a state of siege, the short bridegroom, having ascended into the loft of the same and planted his round face at a loophole in the end, maintaining a brilliant and steady lookout, with all his eyes toward the front of the building.

The Merry-Makers soon attained the woods, and Bob Bobbylink looking cautiously back saw the pretty serving girl, Hetty Steddle, standing under a cow shed in the road, holding her hips and ready to burst with laughter, as she gaily winked and waved her hand to him.

The next morning the same shabbily dressed crew to which we introduced our readers, might have been seen lurking about the old out-house, basking in the sun as before, but with improved visages, sleek with the fruits of their yesterday's wild adventure!

THE GREAT CHARTER CONTEST IN GOTHAM.

ILLUSTRATING THE CONNEXION BETWEEN PATRIOTISM AND SILK STOCKINGS, AND CACOGRAPHY AND POPULAR RIGHTS.

THERE is a particular season of the year in the city of New York, when ragamuffins and vagabonds take a sudden rise in respectability; when a tarpaulin hat is viewed with the same mysterious regard as the crown of an emperor, and the uncombed locks of a wharf rat or river vagrant, looked upon with as much veneration as if they belonged to Apollo in his brightest moments of inspiration. At this singular and peculiar period in the calendar, all the higher classes, by a wonderful readiness and felicity of condescension, step down from their pedestals and smilingly meet the vulgar gentry, half way up, in their progress to the beautiful table-land of refinement and civilization.

About this time gloves go out of repute and an astonishing shaking of dirty fists takes place all over the metropolis. It is a sight to electrify the heart of a philanthropist to behold a whole community, in a state of such perfect Arcadian innocence, that all meet on terms of familiar affection, where smile responds to smile, with equal warmth though one may dimple a clean countenance and the other force its pellucid way through a fog of earthy particles. Happy, golden time!

Reader, if you chance not to comprehend philosophically, this sweet condition of things, be informed that a Charter Election comes on next month!

The charter contest of the year eighteen hundred and ———, is perhaps the fiercest on record in the chronicles of New York. Several minor skirmishes took place with regard to aldermen, assessors and constables, but the main brunt and heat of the engagement fell upon the election of a Mayor to preside over the portentous destinies of the metropolis during a twelvemonth.

It seemed, from the grounds on which it was fought, to be the

old battle of patrician and plebian. On one side, the candidate was Herbert Hickock, Esquire, a wholesale auctioneer and tolerably good latin scholar: a gentleman who sallied forth every morning at 9 o'clock, from a fashionable residence in Broadway, dressed in a neat and gentlemanly suit of black, an immaculate pair of gloves, large white ruffles in his bosom and a dapper cane in his hand.

Opposed to him as a candidate for the Mayoralty, was a retired shoemaker, affectionately and familiarly known as Bill Snivel. He was particularly celebrated for the amount of unclean garments he was able to arrange about his person, a rusty, swaggering hat, and a rugged style of English with which he garnished his conversation. The great principles on which the warfare was waged were on the one hand, that tidy apparel is an indisputable evidence of a foul and corrupt code of principles; and on the other, that to be poor and unclean, denotes a total deprivation of the reasoning faculties.

So that the leading object of the Bill Snivel party seemed to be to discover Mr. Hickock in some act of personal uncleanliness or cacography: while the Hickock party as strenuously bent all their energies to the detection of Mr. Bill Snivel in the use of good English or unexceptionable linen. The names with which they mutually christened each other exhibit the depth and strength of their feelings on this point. The one was known as the Silk-stocking gentry; the other by the comprehensive appellation of the Loafers.

At the approach of a New York charter election, it is truly astonishing how great a curiosity springs up as to the personal habits of the gentlemen presented on either side as candidates. The most excruciating anxiety appears to seize the community to learn certain little biographical incidents as to his birth, parentage, morals, and the everyday details of his life. In truth, on this occasion, the wardrobe of one of the nominees had been so often and so facetiously alluded to by two or three of the newspapers, that the Bill Snivel General Vigilance Committee had felt it their duty to furnish one of their members with a large double telescope—which he planted (by resolution of the Committee) every night and morning directly opposite the chamber window of Herbert Hickock, Esquire, with the laudable purpose of discovering in an authentic way, what were that candidate's habits of dress. A manuscript report of his ingenious observations, it is said, was circulated freely among the members of the committee. No copy, that I have

learned, has ever found its way to the press. As every one knows, the advent of an election creates a general and clamorous demand for full-grown young men of twenty-one years of age. To meet this demand, a surprising cultivation of beards took place among the Hickock youth who happened to want a few days or months of that golden period.

Furthermore, a large number of the Bill Snivel voters in the upper wards of the city, became suddenly consumptive, and were forced to repair for the benefit of their health to the more southern and genial latitudes of the first, second and third wards: and the Hickock men residing in those wards were seized as suddenly with alarming bilious symptoms which compelled them to emigrate abruptly to the more vigorous and bracing regions in the northern part of the island. Pleasant aquatic excursions, too, were undertaken by certain gentlemen of the Bill Snivel tinge of politics (whose proper domicils were at Hartford and Haverstraw) and they came sailing down the North and East rivers, in all kinds of craft, on visits to their metropolitan brethren, and dropped their compliments, in the shape of small folded papers, in square green boxes with a slit in the top.

To keep up the spirit of the contest, several hundreds of the Silk-stocking men packed themselves regularly every night into a large, oblong room, and presented a splendid collection of fine coats and knowing faces—like a synod of grave herrings in a firkin—to the contemplation of sundry small men with white pocket handkerchiefs and bad colds, who in turn, came forward and apostrophized a striped flag and balcony of boys on the opposite wall.

Certain other hundreds of the Bill Snivel men regaled themselves in a similar way in another large oblong room except that the gentlemen who came forward to them served themselves up in spotted silk handkerchiefs—voices a key louder—noses a thought larger—and faces a tinge redder than their rivals. The former occasionally quoted latin and the latter took snuff. With regard to the noises which now and then emanated from the lungs of the respective assemblages—there was more music in the shouts and vociferations of the Hickock meetings—more vigour and rough energy in the Bill Snivel. If a zoological distinction might be made, the Bill Snivel voice resembled that of a cage-full of hungry young tigers slightly infuriated, while the Hickock seemed to be modelled on the clamour of an old lion after dinner. Each meeting

had some particular oratorical favourite. In one, a slim man was in the habit of exhibiting a long sallow face at 8 o'clock every evening, between a pair of tall sperm candles, and solemnly declaring that—the country was ruined and that he was obliged to pay twelve and a half cents a pound for liver! At the Bill Snivel, a short stout man with an immense bony fist was accustomed about half an hour later to appear on a high platform—and announce in a stentorian voice that "the People was on its own legs again," which was rather surprising when we know how fond some people are of getting into other people's boots; and that "the Democracy was carrying the country before it," which was also a profound postulate meaning—the Democracy was carrying the Democracy before it—they constituting the country at all times, and the country at all times constituting them!

In the mean time, Committee men of all sorts and descriptions are at work in rooms of every variety of wall and dimension. The whole city is covered with handbills, caricatures, manifestoes, exposures, pointed facts, neat little scraps of personal history and various other pages of diverting political literature. Swarms cluster about the polls: banners stream from windows, cords and housetops. A little man rides about on the box of an enormous waggon, blowing a large brass trumpet and waving a white linen flag with a catching inscription—and he labours at the trumpet till he blows his face out of shape and his hat off his head, and waves the flag until it seems to be a signal of distress thrown out by the poor little man with the brass trumpet, just as he has broken his wind and is sinking with exhaustion. Scouring Committees beat furiously through the wards in every direction. Diving, like sharks, into cellars, they bring up, as it were between their teeth, wretched scare-crow creatures who stare about when introduced to daylight as if it were as great a novelty to them as roast beef. Ascending into garrets, like mounting hawks, they bear down in their clutches trembling old men who had vegetated in those dry, airy elevations apparently during a whole century. Prominent among the bustling busy-bodies of the hour is Fahrenheit Flapdragon; member of the Hickock General Committee, the Hickock Vigilance Ward Committee, the Advertising Committee, the Wharf Committee, the Committee on Flags and Decorations, the Committee on Tar-barrels and tinder-boxes, one of the Grand General Committee on drinking gin-slings and cigar-smoking, and member of the Com-

mittee on noise and applause. By dint of energetic manœuvering, Flapdragon had likewise succeeded in being appointed chairman of a single Committee, viz.—that on chairs and benches. He attained this enviable elevation, (the performance of the arduous duties of which drew upon him the eyes of the whole ward and the carpenter who furnished the benches !) through the votes of a majority of the Committee of five—one of whom was his brother-in-law and the other his business partner. The casting vote he had himself given judiciously, in his own favour. Fahrenheit Flapdragon bore a conspicuous part in the great Charter Contest, now waging between Hickock and Snivel. In fact he was so embarrassed with engagements during this hot-blooded election, that he was compelled to furnish himself with a long-legged gray horse early on the morning of the second day, to carry him about with sufficient rapidity from point to point to meet them as they sprang up. The little man, of a truth, was so tossed and driven about by his various self-imposed duties in the Committee-rooms, streets, and along the wharves that he came well nigh going stark mad. During the day he harried up and down the streets, from poll to poll, bearing tidings from one to the other—distributing tickets—cheering on the little boys to shout, and placing big men in the passages to stop the ingress of Bill Snivel voters: I say during the day he posted from place to place on his lank gray nag with such fury that many sober people thought he had lost his wits and was hunting for them on horseback in this distracted manner.

At night, what with drinking gin-slings and brandy-and-water at the bar to encourage the vagabonds that stood looking wistfully on—talking red-hot Hickock politics to groups of four, five and six—and bawling applause at the different public meetings he attended —he presented at the close of the day's services such a personal appearance that any one might have supposed he had stayed in an oven till the turning point between red and brown arrived, and then jumped out and walked home with the utmost possible velocity to keep up his colour. There are seventeen wards in the city and every ward has its Fahrenheit Flapdragon.

While these busy little committee-men are bustling and hurrying about, parties of voters are constantly arriving on foot, in coaches, barouches, open waggons and omnibuses, accompanied by some electioneering friend who brings them up to the polls. Every hour the knots about the door swell, until they fill the street. In the in-

terior of the building, meanwhile, a somewhat different scene presents itself. Behind a counter on three wooden stools, three men are perched with a green box planted in front of the one in the centre, and an officer with a staff at either end. The small piece of green furniture thus guarded is the ballot box, and all sorts of humanity are every moment arriving and depositing their votes. Besides the officers, two or three fierce looking men stand around the box on either side and challenge in the most determined manner every suspicious person of the opposite politics. "I dispute that man's vote," says one, as a ragged young fellow with a dirty face and strong odour of brandy approaches. "I don't believe he is entitled to a vote." "Yes, he is," replies another, "I know him—he's a good citizen. But you may swear him if you choose!" At this the vagabond is pushed up to the counter by one of his political friends—his hat is knocked off by an officer—the chief inspector presents an open bible—at which the vagabond stares as if it were a stale codfish instead of the gospels—a second friend raises his hand for him and places it on the book—and the chief inspector is about to swear him—when the Hickock challenger cries out "ask him if he understands the nature of an oath!" "What is an oath?" asks the inspector solemnly. "D—n your eyes!" hiccups the young Bill Snivel voter.

"Take him out!" shouts the inspector, and the officers in attendance, each picking up a portion of his coat collar, hurry him away with inconceivable rapidity through a back door into the street, and dismiss him with a hearty punch of their staves in the small of his back.

All over the city, wherever a square inch of floor or pavement can be obtained—in bar-rooms, hotels, streets, newspaper offices—animated conversations are got up between the Hickock gentry and the Bill Snivel men.

"If dandy Hickock gets in" says a squint-eyed man with a twisted nose, "I've got a rooster-pigeon—I'll pick his feathers bare—stick a pipe stem in his claw, friz his top-knot—and offer him as a stump-candidate for next Mayor."

"Can your rooster-pigeon spell his own name, Crossfire?" asked a tall Hickock street inspector—"If he can't, you'd better put him a quarter under Bill Snivel. It would be as good as an infant school for him!"

"I think I'd better take my little Bantam-cock," retorted the squint-

eyed man, "he's got a fine comb which would answer for shirt-ruffles," and the Bill Snivel auditors gave a clamorous shout.

"If he's got a comb," said the tall inspector stooping toward the shouters, "it's more than what Bill Snivel's head has seen this two and forty years!" The Hickock gentry now sent up in turn, a vigorous hurrah: and a couple of ragamuffins in the mob, who had been carrying on a little under-dialogue on their own account, now pitched into each other in the most lively manner, and after being allowed to phlebotomize each other very freely, were drawn apart by their respective coat tails and carried to a neighbouring pump.

The battle by no means ceases at the going down of the sun; for, besides the two large assemblages to which we have before alluded, there is in each ward a nightly meeting in some small room in the second story of a public house, where about one hundred and fifty miscellaneous human beings are entertained by sundry young attornies and other spouters, practising the English language and trying the force of their lungs. At these meetings you will be sure, (whenever you attend them) to meet with certain stereotyped faces—which are always there, always with the same smiling expression—and looking as if they were parts of the wainscoting or lively pieces of furniture fixed there by the landlord to please his guests. The smiling gentlemen are office-seekers. In the corner, sitting on a small table you may observe a large puffed-out man with red cheeks: he is anxious to obtain the appointment of beer-gauger under the corporation. Standing up by the fire-place is a man with a dingy face and shivering person who wishes to be weigher of coal, talking to a tall fellow who stoops in the shoulders like a buzzard, with a prying nose and eye, and a face as hard and round as a paving-stone, who is making interest for reappointment as street inspector. There is also another, with a brown, tanned countenance, patriotically lamenting the decline of the good, old Revolutionary spirit—who wants the office of leather inspector.

The most prominent man at these meetings is orator Bog: a personage whose reputation shoots up into a wonderful growth during the three days of election, while his declamation is fresh, but which suddenly withers and wilts away when the heat of the conflict has cooled. His eloquence is the peculiar offspring of those sunny little Republican hot beds, ward meetings.

He has just described the city as "split like a young eel from

nose to tail by the diabolical and cruel knife of those modern Catalines" the aldermen of the city—they having recently run a main street through it north and south.

"These are the men," he exclaimed with an awful smile on his countenance, "these are the men that dare insult democracy by appearing in public—like goslings—yes, like goslings!—with such articles as these on their legs!" and thrusting a pair of tongs—heretofore dexterously concealed under the skirts of his coat—into his hat, which stood upon the table before him—he drew out a pair of fine silk stockings and swung them triumphantly over the heads of the mob which screamed and clamoured with huge delight at the spectacle. And such articles as these!" he shouted, producing from the same receptacle a shirt about small enough for a yearling infant with enormous green ruffles about large enough for a Patagonian.

"Look at it!" cried Bog, throwing it to one of the mob.

"It's pine shavin's painted green," shouted the mob.

"Smell of it!" cried Bog.

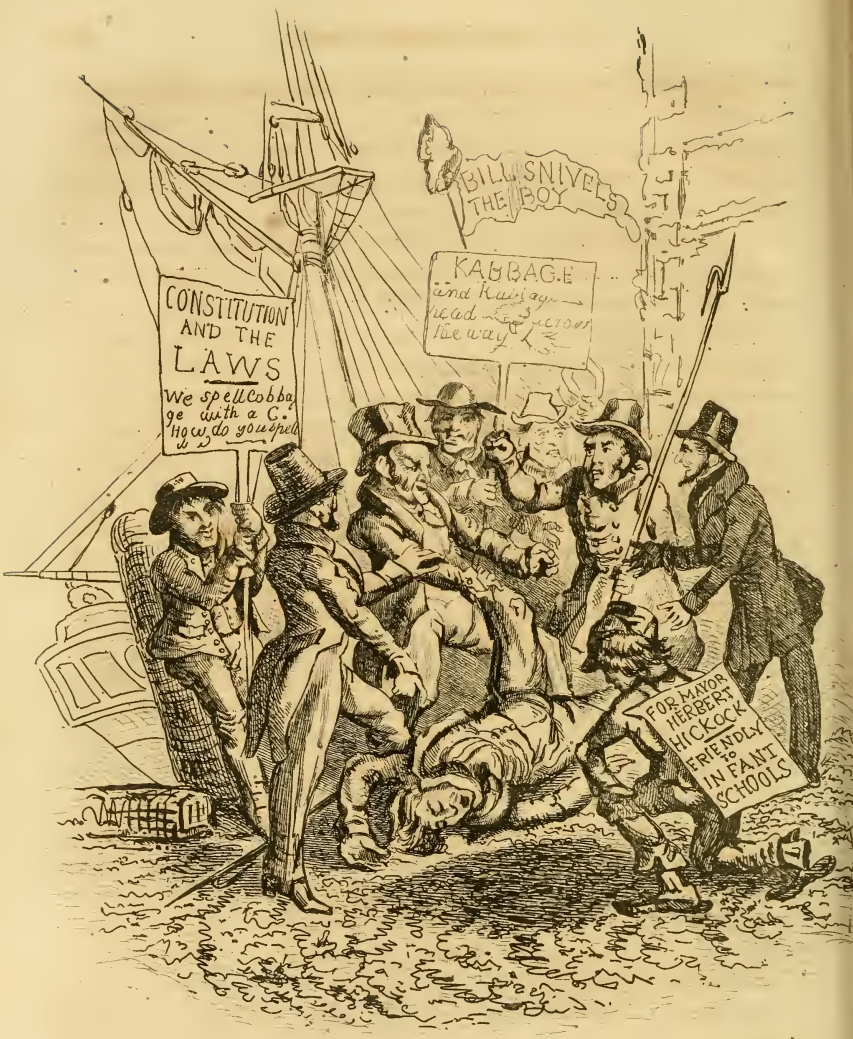
"It's scented with assy-fetid-y!" vociferated the ecstatic Bill Snivel men, and a hearty burst of laughter broke forth.

Several lusty vagabonds came near going into fits when orator Bog facetiously though gravely stopped his nose with his thumb and finger and remarked, "I think some one has brought a skunk into the room!"

The last hour of the last day of the Great Charter Contest has arrived. Every carman, every merchant's clerk, every negro with a freehold, every stevedore, every lamp-lighter, every street-sweeper, every vagrant, every vagabond has cast his vote.

Garret, cellar, sailor's boarding-house, shed, stable, sloop, steamboat, and dock-yard, have been ransacked, and not a human being on the great island of Manhattan has escaped the clutch of the Scouring and District Committees of the two great contending parties. At this critical moment, and as the sun began to look horizontally over the chimney-tops with a broad face as if he laughed at the quarrels of Hickock gentry and Bill Snivel men, two personages were prowling and prying along a wharf on the East river, like a brace of inquisitive snipe.

At the self same moment the eyes of both alighted on an object floating in the water, at the self same moment both sprang forward with a boat-hook in his hand and fastened upon the object of their


BILL SNIVEL'S THE BOY
KABBAGE and Kurjay read the other way
CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS
We spell Cobbage with a C. How do you spell it?
FOR MAYOR HERBERT HICKCOCK FRIENDLY IN FANT SCHOOLS

The Disputed Voter.

mutual glances, one at the one extremity—the other, at the other. In a time far less than it takes the north star to twinkle, the object was dragged on shore and proved to be the body of a man enveloped in a fragmentary blue coat, roofless hat and corduroy pantaloons.

"I claim him," said one of the boat-hook gentlemen, a member of the Seventh Ward Hickock Wharf Committee. "I saw him first! He's our voter by all that's fair."

"He wants a jug-full of being yours, my lad," retorted the other, a member of the Bill Snivel Wharf Committee. "He's too good a christian to be yours—for don't you see he's jest been baptized."

"He's mine," responded the Hickock committee-man, "for my hook fastened in his collar and thereby saved his head—he couldn't vote without his head!"

"A timber-head he must have if he'd vote the shirt-ruffle ticket," retorted the Bill Snivel committee-man.

By this time a mob had gathered about the disputants, who stood holding the rescued body each by a leg with its head downward to let the water drain from its windpipe.

"Why you land-lubbers," cried a medical student pushing his professional nose through the throng, "you'll give the man the apoplexy if you hold him that way just half a minute longer." In a trice after, a second medical student arrived and hearing what the other had said, exclaimed—"It's the best thing you can do—hold him just as he is or he's sure to get the dropsy." The mob, however, interfered—the man was laid on his back—and one of the medical students (who was propitious to the Hickock code of politics) taking hold of one wrist—and the other (who advocated the Bill Snivel system) seizing the other, they commenced chafing his temples and rubbing the palms of his hands.

The Wharf Committee-men meantime felt inclined to renew the dispute as to their claim on the body of the half drowned loafer, but by advice of the medical gentlemen the claim was referred, to be settled by the man's own lips whenever he should recover the use of them. The medical students chafed and rubbed and every minute leaned down to the ear of the drowned body, as if to catch some favorable gnosis. "Hurrah for Hickock," shouted the man opening his eyes just as one of the medical students had withdrawn his mouth from his ear. The Hickock portion of the mob gave three cheers. "Hurrah for Bill Snivel," shouted the resuscitated

loafer as the other medical student applied his lips to his organ of hearing.

The loafer was now raised upon his legs and marshalled like some great hero between the medical students and the two members of the Wharf Committees—and borne towards the polls—having each hand alternately supplied by the Hickock people and the Bill Snivel with the tickets of the respective parties. They arrived at the door of the election room with the body of this important and disputed voter just one minute after sundown, and finding him thus to be of no value, the Hickock medical student and committee-man and the Bill Snivel student and committee-man, united in applying their feet to his flanks and kicking him out of the building!

In two or three days the votes of the city were duly canvassed, and it was found that they stood for Bill Snivel, 13,000—for Herbert Hickock, 13,303—scattering, 20. Three hundred and three learned Bill Snivel gentlemen having, in consequence of their limited knowledge of orthography and politics, voted for Bill Snivel for constable instead of Mayor! Herbert Hickock, Esq. was therefore declared duly elected Mayor of the city and county of New York.

THE WITCH AND THE DEACON.

A DEACON WITH A HEART LIKE A WHIRLPOOL, AND A GOBLIN WITH A TAIL LIKE A FISH.

During the close of the seventeenth century the Prince of Darkness made several very hot inroads into different quarters of the righteous old colonies of New England. In truth, there was so "prodigious a descent of devils upon divers places near the centre of this province,"* and it suddenly swarmed in every nook and corner with such crowds of spectres and goblins, that the good people were in a fair way of being ejected to furnish them a settlement. Never was the devil supplied with so great a variety of recruits. The fierce incursions of which I have spoken were sometimes headed by one captain, sometimes by another. In one quarter, the troops were led on by a Black Man of a gunpowder aspect and more than human dimensions: this fellow generally skirmished about the edges of woods and timber-lands, clutching up straggling old beldames and tame Indians. Then there was your tawny-coloured goblin, short of stature, who was sometimes seen with a whole pack of spectres hovering at his heels: your pugnacious devil whose chief sport it was to distribute dry blows liberally about the ears of the poor wretches who came within his jurisdiction—your high-flying devil who snatched people out of their chambers and horsed them away miles through the air over trees and hills free of postage—besides a large assortment of menial imps, who were drubbed heartily by their employer if they failed to do their ghostly work to his satisfaction. To these, were sometimes added a better-bred class of goblins, who acted as secretaries and book-keepers (at a liberal salary I presume) to the devil, and

* Cotton Mather.

who had charge of the great red muster-book to which new recruits were forced to put their hands.* Never was a campaign of Old Nick better arranged or carried on with more spirit.

It was on a night in the year sixteen ninety-seven, and after the smoke and heat of the main engagement at Salem had died away, that a tall woman about sixty years of age was crossing a stone fence in the choleric little village of Rye. It was a still, cheerful night in the close of August, and the moon shone down into the field upon which the aged woman was entering, with a brightness so pure that it seemed almost unnatural.

Before her lay an enclosed space of about four acres, stretching up from the edge of a quiet little brook to the brow of a hill, and covered with bushes, shrubs and herbs of every description. Near the water's edge a whole company of braggart bulrushes thrust up their heads and lorded it over the inoffensive and unambitious little stream with an air of vast superiority; while around these topping pretenders, a few humble water-cresses gathered themselves and modestly vegetated and blossomed. Farther on and along the fence, a testy crew of blackberry bushes had assembled and stood wagging their heads in every wind that stirred, and near them a malignant poison-vine crept along the rails like a serpent.

As the old woman stepped into the field out of a piece of woods that overhung it from the west, she startled a garter-snake from the bank and the timid creature, with its light streaks of yellow dashed with spots of blue, twinkled away through the grass, toward the brook: leaving behind it or seeming to leave behind it as it glided swiftly along, a trail of mixed orange-coloured light.

"A better night, heart could not wish," muttered the old woman as she strided into the field. "But where Dick delays I cannot guess: he promised to be about through the village with the basket before I could be here by the woods. A slow foot gets a light supper, Dick!" Uttering this sententious saying she bustled about the ground plucking here and there a handful of some herb or other and laying it carefully in the lap of her gown. In a few minutes she was joined by a low, strange-looking young man, about twenty years old, who had upon his head a hat which had been, perhaps, originally of the shape of a bell but which was pinched

* For authority as to these abstruse points, consult "More Wonders of the Invisible World" (1700), tracts, pamphlets and surviving aged females.

by time and weather at the top, until it now resembled a withered winter-pear; on his arm he bore a dilapidated oaken basket.

"Richard, wherefore didst thou tarry?—Thou knewest the business was pressing, hitherward: the ale you might have tippled at another time!"

"I have not tarried," replied the strange-looking young man, "to guzzle ale in the village nor to quaff of old Zickland's cider-casks; nor has old Zickland's watch-dog held me, as he did the other night, by the coat-tail."

"What was it then that kept thee?" asked the old woman, peering into his face, with a look of considerable anxiety and interest.

"No less than that church mastiff, Deacon Brangle, and his yoke-fellow Fishtyke, the Elder. They fastened on me with tongue and teeth as I passed the parsonage—and demanded, whither I was going? for what purpose that basket was meant? and whether you was at home to-night?"

"A curse be on the tribe!" said his aged companion lifting her head up until her bowed form was almost erect, and striking a staff which she bore in her hand sharply upon the ground. "An old woman's curse light on the meddlesome interlopers, the children of Belial that will not let the musty taper of an old body's life go out without helping it with a devilish whiff of their pious breath!"

"Curse not so loud, if you please, Aunt Gatty," said the young man, "the big-eared dogs are not far off, I reckon; for I saw them sneak up into the shadow of the fence, as I left 'em, with their faces turned this way."

"If the evil will hear, let them hear," continued Aunt Gatty in a still louder voice in spite of her companion's remonstrance, "I have been hunted like a paynter from Salem to Weathersfield—from Weathersfield to Har'ford—through every hole and corner of the colonies—and now they would worry me out of this abiding-place with their horns of Jericho and false shoutings and clamours at my heels!" The wrath of Aunt Gatty now sunk into a sullen silence and they proceeded quietly in their labour.

"It's strange, Dick," she said at length in a calmer tone, "that men who spend an hour, morning and arternoon, one day out of seven to tell how much they love their brethren, will harrass an old woman who spends her time in doing the same thing without

sayin' anything about original sin or her pious intentions—curing bodies more nor they cure souls, I'll warrant!" "It's the cock that mounts the fence and splits his throat with crowing that lays no eggs, you know, Aunt Gatty," replied Dick, with a subdued laugh. "Yes," returned Aunt Gatty, adopting the same strain, "and you know Dick, how often deacon crow in the woods, visits about, in his black coat, among the birds to see that they're all in a plump, healthy condition"—"Particularly 'bout killing-time!" interposed Dick. Another brief pause now ensued, which was interrupted again by Aunt Gatty's remarking—"I trow, Richard here is the finest plaintain-leaf I've found this many a day: it's broad enough to kiver any galled horse's haunch that ever smarted, or to cure the pinch of the worst witch that ever rode a bean-pole!"

This observation was followed up by a long and elaborate lecture on the various uses to which plaintain might be judiciously applied.

"What's this?" asked Dick at the close of her shrewd observations, presenting an herb with a small crooked root, and a smooth green leaf something in the shape of an Indian arrowhead.

"Thou art a pretty fellow Dick Snikkers, to gather yerbs!" said the old woman taking the plant and giving it a hasty examination—"Why, this is nothing more nor less than colt's foot. It 'udn't take a witch to tell thee that Dick! Come this way, Richard," she continued, sitting down upon a rock in the middle of the field, laying her crutch across her lap and placing the basket at her side, "it's time that you know'd the properties of yerbs: eighteen, last shearing time, and not able to tell old colt's foot!"

Dick Snikkers at this bidding took a seat at her side, and culling from the basket, herb after herb, the old woman expatiated on its qualities with a learned spirit.

"Here's wild yisup, Dick," she said, "you must be kerful to tell it from balsam; which is shorter and more bunch-like at top. It has a pleasant smell, and is a very nice yerb, Dick. Well should I know thee, yisup!" holding a bunch of it up and contemplating it with a fixed and thoughtful eye, "for they gave thee to the poor girl, Maggy Rule, of Salem, that was possest by evil angels. They said, Richard, 'I was her evil spirit!—poor thing, she's in Heaven now, and can tell whether old Gartred Heerabout ever harmed her life in thought, word or look!" "Hush!" said

Dick Snikkers, "I heard some one over there by the sassafras tree." At that moment the shadow of a man glided behind the trunk of a monstrous black walnut, which overhung the brook; but the shade of the tree prevented his being discerned by either of the parties.

"Pooh!" said the old woman, listening anxiously for a moment, "It's nothing but a dead nut that fell from a dry limb."

"'Tis more than that Aunt Gatty, I'm sure," responded Dick, "for I heard something cough like a man—and—hark—there's some one answering him over here by the elder-bushes!" "I hear no noise, Dick; the moon has put the whim into your head—or else—its nothing more than a couple of hoarse crickets playing a double tune on their flutes under a sorrel patch!"

From some source or other, however, Aunt Gatty had been impressed with the necessity of quitting the spot as speedily as possible and obtaining the shelter of a good roof. She therefore hurriedly closed her lecture, hooked the basket upon her arm, seized her crutch, and followed by Dick Snikkers, hastened away.

The next morning the sun, at an early hour as it shone or rather struggled through a single dusky pane in the eastern side of the vestry room of the old Rye church, fell upon three men seated at a triangular table, each at a side. The silver-mounted cane of one of them lay obliquely across the table, and the hats of all three hung upon wooden pins fixed about the apartment. One of the party was a middle-aged man with a long, dry countenance and a complexion like a mulberry. His coat was buttoned up, in a threatening manner, from waistband to chin, and about his whole person and bearing there was an air of pompous authority. "This matter must be looked to," said he, throwing his head back into his coat collar, advancing his respectable paunch, and placing his hands knowingly under the tails of his coat. "The Lord will not suffer the evil to triumph—nor will I. Blessed be the name of God, he hath given unto us his inspired statutes; and as first deacon of the Congregational meeting-house in Rye, Philip Brangle, will enforce them, even unto the hanging of witches and sorcerers!"

"There I differ from thee brother Brangle: I hold that witches should be exterminated by fire and fagot, for thereby the evil angel or spirit is conquered with his own element, yea, even hell-fire!"

This heroic suggestion proceeded from the mouth of Mr. John

Fishtyke, elder, and a most singular mouth it was, and still more singular was the whole countenance to which it belonged. Nature from some unaccountable whim or other had seen fit to group all the features of Mr. John Fishtyke in the very centre of his face: his nose, eyes, and mouth were huddled closely together, leaving a very extensive suburb of unsettled visnomy to lie barren beyond. The elder's head from a front view was thus made to resemble the human lineaments painted in the bull's eye of a large target.

"I fancy not," continued the owner of this paradoxical countenance, "being dragged twice through the pond by the same cat. Hanging hath been tried and found of none effect. Were not sorcerers and witches strung up like onions, at Weathersfield and Salem, Deacon Brangle—and what did it avail? Did not witchcraft increase? Did not the lions and bears of hell abound greatly thereafter?—This is pulpit-news!"

"I care not to argue the question at this present season," replied the mulberry-complexioned deacon. "Hung she shall be—if I am Philip Brangle, Deacon—like a dead skunk!"

"If she be not burned, by the grace of God, I will yield up my eldership: burned to a black crust, the foul hag!"

"I have picked the gallows tree; therefore disquiet thyself no further, Elder Fishtyke!" retorted Brangle.

"And I have chosen the faggots for her burning, and they are now cleft in my door yard—so be at ease!"

"Thou art in league with the wretches, I verily fear, Mr. Fishtyke: thou so strongly urgest fire, in which thou knowest (being their natural element) they may live like salamanders!"

"Has it come to this!" exclaimed John Fishtyke, advancing one leg before the other and dashing his fist furiously upon the triangular table, while a general conflagration raged in the unsettled outskirts of his physiognomy, which gradually extended inward kindling his eyes, nose and cheeks until his whole countenance was fairly a-blaze. "Ha! ha! has it come to this, I am colleague of witches—am I?—As true as the Holy One of Israel liveth"—he was proceeding to utter some terrible threat when he was interrupted by the gentleman who occupied the third side of the triangle, who mildly remarked, "Before we proceed to hang or burn the accused, would it not be well to have evidence of her guilt?"

Here was common ground for Brangle and Fishtyke, who were not to be cheated of their victim by the mere want of proofs, and they both broke out together. "Did I not see her last night with her familiar, in Lyon's black meadow," said Brangle, "Giving him hellish instruction in drugs," continued Fishtyke, "confessing that she was Margaret Rule's evil angel," said Brangle, "and that she was the worst witch that ever rode a bean-pole," continued Fishtyke. "What was it she averred concerning the lameness of Lyon's colt's foot?" "That she had a hand in it," answered Fishtyke.

"Pause, if you please, my friends," said the mild man who was the clergyman of the care or parish—"What look and person had her familiar?"

In reply to this question, Deacon and Elder again broke forth in a common cry—"A huge black man with hair like white wool,' said Fishtyke.

"A small white man with black hair," said Brangle.

"He bore an enormous matchlock in his hand," said Fishtyke.

"It was a slim fishing-rod," said Brangle.

"Horns like an ox," continued Fishtyke.

"A sailor's cap close to his head, methought," said Brangle.

"A long tail behind him like a whale."

"A round-about and tight breeches."

"Hold, gentlemen," interposed the mild clergyman—"Be seated, an it please you. Your testimony differs so widely as to the personal appearance of the woman's familiar or goblin, I doubt whether it would be possible for you ever to identify the supposed sorceress herself. We had better proceed to the business of our care."

"If you please," said the mulberry-faced Brangle, rising with much solemnity, embedding his head in his coat collar, advancing his swag-belly and adjusting his hands beneath his coat-tail as before,—"If you please: the Lord in his righteous and inscrutable providences hath made Philip Brangle a Deacon and head of the Rye Congregational settlement. The duties, the cares, the labours, the anxieties of that station he intends to fulfil until 'Philip Brangle' is indorsed on a silver plate upon his coffin. As to this witch—this vile bosom-friend and ape of the devil—if ocular proof be not sufficient, is there not enough—yea, more than enough of other evidences?"

"As brief as convenient, Deacon Brangle," interposed the mild clergyman.

"Was it longer ago than last Sabbath day," continued Brangle, "that I saw her, at a public meeting—leave the church in haste and forcibly put to the door as she passed out. The devil had sent for her and she must come!"

"It might have been the cholic," said the mild clergyman.

"On the twenty-second of June last," resumed the Deacon, referring to a gilt-edged note-book that he held in his hand, "did I not hear the sound of a trumpet, from her hovel, late in the evening, summoning a meeting of witches and sorcerers at that place?"

"It was the horn of the stage-driver," said the mild clergyman, "for I received a letter by the same mail. He was detained beyond his hour by a break in the Harlæm bridge."

Nettled by this summary disposal of his charges, he at length exclaimed, as if he expected to settle the question beyond dispute in his own favour, by so cogent an evidence—"Do you tell me, Sir, that the fowls of Mr. Deliverance Lyon have not been under diabolical possession ever since this Gad Heerabout came into these parts? Have not many of them gone off the roost and disappeared, none could tell whither! What hath become of that fine cock-turkey—the pride of his yard? Whither have gone his fatted geese and his noble brood of short-legged hens? Evil angels have made way with them, I fear; they have suffered sorely from spectral visitation."

"More probably converted into chicken-pie and roasted birds, by Mungo Park, his head slave: with Richard Snikkers as an accomplice," suggested the mild clergyman.

"Will you have the woman examined in our presence?" cried Philip Brangle, as a last resort. "I saw her just pass the door."

"To that there can be no reasonable hindrance," answered the clergyman, "if it be done soberly."

Thereupon Messrs. Brangle and Fishtyke prepared to sally forth, arrest Gatty Heerabout and bring her before the parochial court.

It may be as well to observe in this place, that Dick Snikkers, before the session of the court began, had found his way under the floor of the church—lifted a board, and climbing over the pulpit, landed himself in a little terra incognita of an attic or garret above the small vestry-room in which it was assembled. Here, through a knot hole, he had listened to all their proceedings and enjoyed the

inexpressible pleasure of observing the combustible countenance of Fishtyke, and the mulberry complexion of Deacon Brangle, in their various striking phases.

As soon as the apprehension of Dame Heerabout was named, he had made his way back into the open air leaped two or three fences —stood in the road before Aunt Gatty—and announced to her their purpose of questioning her in person.

" Let 'em question," she replied in answer to Dick's information, standing erect and turning her face toward the church—" I fear no man, face to face, to answer unto the deeds done in the body; as far as man may rightly question. On to the meeting house : they shall not be leg-weary nor arm-weary in dragging me to the trial!" Mastering her crutch with a strong hand, and adjusting her bonnet carefully to her head, she marched with a haughty step toward the vestry-room. She arrived at the door just as Brangle had planted his cane upon the ground to take his first step towards her apprehension.

" How is this, Jezabel!" he exclaimed, taking her violently by the wrist, " hast thou the effrontery to approach the sanctuary so nearly as this after leaving it as thou didst last Lord's day."

" Take off that hand," she exclaimed in turn, " or an acquaintance will be gotten up forthwith betwixt my staff and thy head." And so saying she raised her crutch in token of the promised introduction; but Deacon Brangle, unwilling to trespass on her kindness in that particular, speedily dismissed her hand from his grasp.

The whole party was now assembled in the vestry-room.

" Gartred Heerabout," said the mild clergyman, " you have been suspected of witchcraft by Deacon Brangle and Elder Fishtyke. Whatever I may think of the charges which have been made against you, I was willing that you should be examined in vestry before you were called to answer for your life to the civil magistrate. Deacon Brangle, you may examine her—temperately, if you please!"

" Woman!" began Brangle, mounting to his feet and screwing his countenance into a hard, inquisitorial expression—" Woman : were you not out last night culling drugs, for hellish purposes, in the black meadow? and instructing your familiar goblin in the art of applying those drugs to purposes of sorcery and witchcraft? Answer as you value your soul!"

" Oh God! God!" exclaimed the woman in reply clasping her

hands and raising them above her head in an attitude and with an expression of intense supplication—"Merciful God! the very bread that a poor old woman eats, turns bitter in her mouth! My masters," she continued, dropping her hands heavily upon her breast and turning her gaze upon the party about the table—"My masters, I am nothing but a poor old herb-gatherer. If to soothe the lonely hours of some broken, sick man, with a simple medicine—a plantain-leaf, a bit of birch bark or a drink of wild yisup tea, makes Gartred Heerabout a witch, be she a witch to time's end and yea, for aught I care, to eternity's end—if such might be!"

"A confession as to the drugs," cried Deacon Brangle.

"Palpably," responded Elder Fishtyke—"What says the woman touching the familiar goblin with her in the meadow?"

"It was Dick Snikkers, please your worship," replied Aunt Gatty, with a smile that betrayed something of contempt, "helping me gather the yerbs—and I was telling him the yerbs' qualities."

"A fine fable, thou old brass-jawed hag: her soul is in a hopeful way, is it not think you brother Fishtyke?" said Brangle, turning to the Elder, "she exhibits observable symptoms of a new creature!—Poor wretch, thou hadst better recall what thou saidest last night about the bewitching of Margaret Rule of Salem! out with it!"

"May the gracious One pardon thee for this mistreatment of an old friendless woman. I never harmed thee—why shouldest thou persecute me? I never laid hand's weight on child or chick of thine—why wilt thou smite me with hard words! I am no witch, God knows, but a simple, sarviceful old body with a soul like yourself Deacon Brangle, believe it or not as you choose!"

The old woman dropped her head upon her bosom and sobbed audibly and heavily; and the mild clergyman was so much affected by her emotion that he was forced to turn his head away to conceal a tear.

"A soul like Deacon Brangle," cried the vestryman horror-struck with the supposition. "A soul like Deacon Brangle!—thou art fool as well as witch. Begone—it is folly to waste words in examining such as thee. The rope of the hangman will settle the matter before sun-down—begone!"

In spite of the remonstrance and entreaty of the clergyman, he enforced his command by seizing the old woman and dragging

her forcibly toward the door. Her spirit was aroused by this unexpected insult and, exerting a strength not supposed to belong to her, she threw off his grasp, and standing proudly erect, exclaimed—"Woe upon thee and thine!—henceforth forever—woe and wailing without end! Or ever the sun sinks, Gatty Heerabout mayhap will be beyond reach of judge or deacon." With these words she strided calmly and haughtily away.

As she gained the door, Deacon Brangle, said in a hushed and trembling voice, "She is aided by devils I do believe: Satan I verily fear wrenched her arm away from my hold;" and as she disappeared he lifted his voice and cried out after her—"Avoid thou she-devil in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, avoid!"

As Deacon Brangle wended homeward from the vestry-room after the close of the morning's business he discovered Dick Snikkers sitting upon the fence of Rye bridge, whistling with all his might.

He presented to the vision of the Deacon a very singular and novel spectacle, having on the upper part of his person a gay white roundabout and pear-shaped hat, and on his nether extremities a pair of tight pantaloons, and low, red shoes; and possessing withal a nose turned up slightly at the end which gave a humorous appearance to his visage, and a set of twinkling, black eyes that kept a bright look-out upon the little, hooked feature just mentioned. Add to this that he now had both hands forced vehemently into his pockets, and that both cheeks were inflated with the blasts of wind which supplied the clamorous music that reached Deacon Brangle's ear, and we may honestly say that he furnished a rare and original object of contemplation.

"Good morrow, your worship," said Dick Snikkers, pausing just long enough in his labour, to utter these words, and resuming his musical vocation as soon as they were delivered.

"Good morning, Mr. Snikkers," responded the Deacon, darkening his mulberry complexion with an incipient frown, with the expectation of awing Mr. Snikkers into silence or a petrefaction, "You seem to be in fine spirits this morning!"

"Only a whistling a little for the consumption," replied Dick.

"Whistling for the consumption!" exclaimed Mr. Brangle moderating the severity of his manner considerably—for his curiosity equalled his pompousness every day in the week, except vestry-meeting-days and Sundays—"That's a very singular remedy Richard," said he familiarly.

"Not at all, your worship," answered Dick, charmed with his style of address, and throwing a queer look out of the corner of his eye—"Not at all your worship—we poor folk can't afford to pay the doctor—so we must needs make natur' our mediciner: Now in the matter of a cold, Deacon Brangle, you'll obsarve if you was ever passing through a lane in a mornin' after a chill, rainy night—you'll obsarve a bird on the end of every stake blowing it out strong through his throat, like a young harry-cane—and what's it for?—Why they've all cocht colds over night and they're a whistling 'em away!"

At this profound and philosophical explanation, the mulberry countenance of Philip Brangle became amazingly thoughtful—he cast his eyes in meditative glances upon the ground—and his chin sank inquiringly upon the silver-mounted extremity of his walking-stick.

"It's so, your worship," said Dick Snikkers, "there can be no doubt on it. I've heard Aunt Gatty tell what I've told your worship more than fifty times!"

"A strange woman, that Dame Heerabout"—said Brangle lifting his mulberry features through which an altogether new expression had suddenly shot. "She's always observing nature, I suppose, Richard? Night and day, are, no doubt, all the same to her in pursuit of this useful knowledge—is it not so, Mr. Snikkers?"

"Does your worship observe any thing green in my left orb?" responded Mr. Snikkers, employing a very elegant species of interrogatory, which is ignorantly supposed to have sprung up in these latter days; whereas it was a common topic of conversation in Æsop's time, between the currant-bush and the gooseberry.

This question seemed to be so peculiarly pointed and pertinent, as to awaken Mr. Brangle's most powerful feelings in reply; and hastily converting his mulberry into a deep red, he exclaimed—Thou beggarly scamp! how darest thou talk in this way to Philip Brangle, first Deacon of the Rye Congregational Church. I'll teach thee what becomes such fellows:—You are hereby summoned to appear before the parochial vestry of our church on Thursday afternoon next, at ten o'clock in the morning, to answer for a contempt of one of its officers," and he handed to Mr. Snikkers a printed summons regularly filled up, with his own name inserted.

Mr. Dick Snikkers, received the document, and immediately tearing two circular holes in it placed it in a very expressive manner across his nose to mimic spectacles and commenced whistling

a psalm-tune. Deacon Brangle had cast his eye back to see how his decisive service of a church-warrant had operated on the nerves of Dick Snikkers, just as that young gentleman had opened his concerto in glasses.

The sight was too much for the pious Brangle, and striding swiftly back, he cried out—"I'm the vestry myself. I'll settle the contempt on the spot. Boy, I will wring thy nose!" Saying this, he darted upon that organ of Dick Snikkers like a pike-fish upon a fresh bait.

"And I'll wring yours!" retorted Dick Snikkers darting upon the same feature of Mr. Brangle. Of the two, Snikkers might be considered the more successful, as he did fasten upon the knob of Mr. Brangle's face, whereas Mr. Brangle merely managed to pass his thumb and finger over the extremity of a smooth willow whistle which hung at one of Dick Snikkers's button-holes. However, he performed the whole ceremony on it with the same hearty honesty as if it had been the genuine organ. Dick Snikkers, meantime, pulling away at the real nose in admirable and muscular style.

At length Snikkers drew off and Brangle drew off carrying with him a nose as red as a brick with pulling, and Dick Snikkers's willow whistle between his fingers.

"Egad," said the Deacon with a horrible chuckle, as he drew out the latter article which he had unconsciously thrust into his coat pocket—"I believe I've pulled the fellow's nose off. Ah!" starting back with a monstrously chop-fallen countenance, "what have we here—the fellow's baby-whistle. It can't be that I was tugging at this all the time," and an awful sensation thrilled through his mind—"It must be—I thought the scamp had a strange notch in his nose!" With this last observation he abruptly pitched the toy over a stone-fence into the bushes; and hurried away meditating revenge and still more resolved to push the matter against Gatty Heerabout, in whose plans this irreverent dog seemed to be an accomplice. It may be well, however, to observe that in carrying his schemes into effect he was doomed to lose the valuable aid and co-operation of Mr. Fishtyke; for that exemplary gentleman had refused to have anything further to do with the affair when he found it impossible to obtain a compromise suggested by him, by which Gatty Heerabout was to be "first burned to a crispy or roasted-pig brown and then hung by the neck till dead." He therefore broke off all connexion with Deacon Brangle,

vaunting that he would before long get a witch to prosecute on his own account!

As the sun sloped toward the west on the afternoon of that same day, and as broad masses of its light entered the open door of a crumbling cottage, or rather hovel, which stood upon the brow of a hill overlooking Rye, they fell upon the form of old Gartred Heerabout, sitting in a rush-bottom chair with a bible spread open on her knees. The excitement of long continued persecution and the sense of insult attached to the charge of witchcraft, together with a strong natural sensibility of character, appear to have at length affected her reason, and as she sat lonely and unfriended in her hovel, her mind poured itself out in reminiscences of an earlier and happier period of life, mingled with bitter denunciations and gloomy forebodings of some dreaded event near at hand.

"The Lord will deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor!" she exclaimed, adopting the phraseology of Scripture. "He is against thee O inhabitant of the vailey. Go up to Lebanon and cry; and lift up thy voice in Beshan. Wo be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. Do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless"—and then she broke abruptly into a different strain.

"Ah Dick, Dick, would that Enoch Heerabout were now living—he was a comely man, Dick, and would have been a good father to thee, and thou shouldst have borne his name, witch's son or no—those were brave days when Enoch came a-wooing:

> Were he as poor as Job,
> And I in a royal robe—
> Made Lord of all the globe,
> He should be mine!

It's a long day that has no sunset—the sun looks blood-red—what can that mean?" she exclaimed, starting to the door and gazing with a wild and fixed eye upon the declining luminary, which was just wheeling its broad and lurid orb into the bosom of a tall oak-forest that crowned a distant height.

At that moment an ominous sound reached her ear—the long, shrill whistle of Dick Snikkers or more properly Dick Heerabout, followed by the tramp of horsemen and the hurtling, confused noise of a multitude drawing near. In an instant more, a large crowd of men, women and children appeared at the foot of the hill with fiery and eager faces turned towards her, and foremost

among them she descried Phillip Brangle with two officers on horseback. The old woman stood rooted and motionless on the threshold, gazing down upon the populace with a look where madness and a certain native heroism of character mingled partly in wrath, partly in scorn. For a moment the undaunted front and noble mien of the accused old woman held them silent and immoveable, but this feeling soon vanished.

"Seize the hag!" cried Deacon Brangle, "tie her hand and foot—see if she will beard the vestry again!"

At this order the two muscular and fierce-looking men dismounted and led the way up the hill, followed by Brangle, who had cautiously thrown himself under the protection of this advanced body. As they approached the house Gatty Heerabout withdrew into the interior and they gained an entrance without opposition or difficulty. When they were within the apartment they discovered her standing erect in its extreme corner holding on high in one hand her bible, while the other was concealed in the folds of her garments; a fierce, supernatural fire kindling in her eyes.

"Execute your warrant on her person!" For a moment they paused again until Deacon Brangle cried out, "Have her in custody forthwith. We must be before the justice ere sun down or we will have no hearing to day!"

Thus urged on, the officers approached the supposed witch, and in an unguarded moment, while her eyes were turned thoughtfully on the setting sun, they sprang upon her and held her in a firm and apparently invincible gripe.

"Once more vouchsafe thy strength," she exclaimed, after she had recovered from the sudden shock, casting her eyes toward heaven. "Once more only!—Away ye devils!" she shouted, exerting a giant's strength, casting the stout men from her like children—"I will render my account to God!" And before they could recover their hold she had plucked a dagger from her girdle, plunged it hilt-deep into her bosom—so that its point pierced her heart—and she fell heavy and lifeless to the floor!

Baulked of this victim, thus unexpectedly, Deacon Brangle, now gave orders for the apprehension of her accomplice, Richard Heerabout; but he was nowhere to be found, having disappeared during the confusion, and he was never after seen or heard of in those bewitched and bloody regions!

DINNER TO THE HON. ABIMELECH PUFFER.

It is a fact, I suspect by this time, pretty generally circulated throughout christendom that when an American politician gets to be a great statesman; when he has achieved fame for himself and everlasting glory for his country, and when nothing more can be done to complete his renown, he takes his——dinner! When his constituents have heaped upon him every honour—elected him to the Common Council—the State Legislature—and finally expanded him into that full-blown flower of human greatness—a member of Congress—they express their incapacity for any further bestowal of dignities—their sense of the utter hopelessness of any higher elevation of the man in the esteem and admiration of the world, by furnishing him with as much roast beef and salad as he can eat. Adroit rogues! they manage to be present with the great man at this his public ordinary and masticating exhibition—though absent.

His heavy constituent is served up by proxy in a surloin: his loquacious one in a calf's head; and his busy, little, young admirer, the clerk or the jeweller's apprentice, in a dish of eels. His mechanical friend comes there in the guise of a stuffed, brown duck with its back to the plate, sticking up its rough, hard web-feet as if it would take him stoutly by the hand. Thus do his countrymen incorporate themselves with the mighty statesman, and enjoy the proximate delight of forming the future substance and bulk of their idol.

The dinner to a great man is generally got up by two newspaper editors, one lean man with a long nose, and a small boy. The editors announce that it is the "intention of a large number of the constituents of the Honorable Mr. —— to give a public dinner to that gentleman at the earliest opportunity." The long nosed, lean man hires the room, and the small boy distributes circulars.

A long-nosed lean man—two editors—and a small boy had per-

formed their part of the business, and the Honorable Abimelech Puffer was expected hourly by the afternoon boat, to partake of a public dinner.

The newspapers were in an agony of announcement and expectation; the sun was on fire with impatience; the streets were literally parched and thirsty with suspense. The ticket-holders assumed clean collars and handkerchiefs, and a crowd of anxious expectants was on the wharf straining their optic nerves and exhausting their nautical knowledge in deciphering the craft that came up the bay, and distinguishing butter-sloops from steamboats. The study of river navigation seemed to have become an epidemic.

Several times the crowd thought fit to throw itself into a state of intense and unnecessary excitement.

"There she is—there's the Aurora Highflyer," said a large vagabond, who was bursting from every part of his dress, like an enormous monthly rose.

"It is the Highflyer—Puffer's in the Highflyer—I know the Highflyer by her pipe and the way she cuts the water—the Committee engaged the Aurora Highflyer to bring on Puffer and twelve baskets of Amboy oysters for the dinner!"

The great vagabond had concluded his explanatory comments; the mob stood with its nose in the air and its mouth agape, stretching forward to catch the first glimpse of the distinguished member: the Aurora Highflyer was hidden from view by a brig which was sailing in the same direction and which kept such equal progress as to conceal it for more than ten minutes.

When the brig had arrived nearly opposite the wharf; the supposed steamboat dropped behind her stern and a fellow in a hat-rim standing in her bows, bawled out, "Dash my vitals! them chaps 'as cum down to see the race! Moses and Melchizedec, who'd ha' thought it Bill?" This facetious personage, in the ardour of a very lively and agreeable fancy, supposed the crowd had collected to witness a match between his mud-scow and the brig Caroline which had been advertised in one of the penny papers!

At length the Aurora Highflyer did make herself apparent: the mob caught sight of a small man with a head like a sphinx, who very obligingly stood on the upper deck with his hat off making the most singular and condescending faces at a huge, wooden spile, and bowing towards the mob.

The mob were, of course, excessively delighted and expressed

their feelings as every well-trained mob does, by an extraordinary shout and a still more extraordinary exhibition of hats and caps. The great man landed.

The crowd grew more affectionate and admiring; they pressed closer and closer.

The Committee were obliged every minute to exclaim, "for Heaven's sake, gentlemen! don't—you'll crush Mr. Puffer!" The great man was finally thrust into a hack by a broad-handed member of the Committee in so forcible a manner that he came very near going through the coach-window at the other side.

A portion of the mob, apparently anticipating this movement, had planted itself on the opposite side of the hack, and obtaining a view of the countenance of the Honorable M. C. as it bobbed that way, successfully executed three cheers in a masterly style; the Committee mounted in—the door closed, and the hack dashed up the street. When they arrived at the saloon, where the dinner was in waiting, they found the doors surrounded by a dense throng who had assembled to take measure of Mr. Puffer's person with their eye and greet him with their most sweet voices. His foot had no sooner struck the pavement than a general "Hurrah! for Puffer!" split the air, and gave an old woman who was sitting in a window across the way, a very vivid idea of a small earthquake. "Nine cheers and an onion, for Puffer!" shouted a discordant gentleman of the opposite politics.

"Give him a smellin'-bottle—the little gentleman's a-fainting!" bawled a second, as Mr. Puffer turned pale at the thought of forcing his way to the door through the well-packed mass of people.

"Fan him with a chip!" cried a third.

"Loosen his corsets!" shouted a forth.

By dint of the active exertions of twelve police-officers with heavy sticks, and four private friends of Mr. Puffer's, who marched before him kicking the mob on the shins, the Honorable Abimelech Puffer was at length safely landed in the room provided for his reception, with the loss of only one gold key out of the bunch at the end of his watch-chain, and one Committee-man, who swooned at the presentation of a butcher-boy's fist directly under his nose, and was obliged to be carried home.

Meantime the ticket-holders had rushed into the saloon, and organized themselves by calling a man with a small voice to the

Apparition of the Hon. A. Puffer.

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chair, and appointing fourteen vice-presidents, each one of the fourteen having a pair of bushy whiskers, and a gold chain slung like a bandit's carbine-belt over his breast. Only a single difficulty arose in arranging the meeting to the entire satisfaction of every one in it, and that was simply that the room was intended to hold one hundred and fifty, and exactly three hundred purchasers of tickets were present. If they should attempt to foist off upon them the amount of dinner they were accustomed to serve up to the number which the room held alone, it was quite clear that some one hundred and fifty good manly voices would be raised to the tune of "Give me back my dollar!" These three hundred gentlemen being concentrated in so moderate a space, it was rather difficult to decide by what process the Honorable Abimelech Puffer was to be established in the chair left vacant for him at the right hand of the President. In fact, this very question came up for discussion in the reception-room.

A subdued stamping, like that given at the theatre for the performers to come on, was heard from the saloon and considerably accelerated the deliberations of the Committee. Time was pressing. The dinner was spoiling. The Hon. A. Puffer began to grow black in the face. A messenger was sent round to learn whether a passage could be made or obtained through the main entrance He returned, and almost breathless with haste and horror, reported that the fat twins (two celebrated and eminent feeders) were at the door, clamouring to be admitted with their tickets. The Committee now began to despair, when a little man timidly suggested that Mr. Puffer might be got in, if he would consent, under the stage by the way which the waiters adopted to hand up their wine to those on the platform. Two of the most influential members of the Committee ventured to break it to Mr. Puffer.

At first he was staggered, but recovering from the shock, and after a brief consultation with his appetite, he agreed to practice the device.

A rumour now reached the saloon that Mr. Puffer was approaching. The three hundred hungry gentlemen were awed into silence, and every eye was turned eagerly toward the door of the Committee-room, when—unexpected vision—a head—a good sized Sphinx-like head, was put out of a trap-door immediately behind the President's chair. Astonishment seized the three hundred ticket-holders. The head smiled. It was discovered, by some half dozen among

the meeting, to be the head of the Honorable Abimelech Puffer. The meeting shouted: the head smiled again. The meeting cheered; the head was followed by a pair of spare, withered legs and the Honorable Abimelech Puffer stood before them.

The Committee under the platform, hurra'd and thumped the boards with their canes, as if they were overjoyed at its successful delivery of so great a birth. The rumbling noise under the stage and the sudden appearance of the distinguished M. C. made it seem as if the earth had gaped like another whale, and cast up from its bowels a second Jonah: a very prophet.

Now that Mr. Puffer was duly installed in his place of honour, the dinner commenced after a vigorous fashion. Sundry gentlemen in the body of the saloon, appeared to adopt Mr. Puffer's countenance as a sort of seasoning for their dishes; for they stole a glance at his expressive features and then took a mouthful; a second glance, a second mouthful, and so on to the end of the course. It gave a relish to their viands. Mr. Puffer, himself, fed in gallant style. About him in a semi-circle—a kind of reverential, Druid's stone-arrangement—the choicest dishes were assembled A private letter had been addressed to him at Washington by a confidential friend to learn whether he preferred fresh shad or trout. and also conveying a general inquiry as to the game, wines &c., which would be most agreeable. In reply, he returned a double epistle written twice across giving full and explicit information. With that important state document in their hands, a committee of three had made a circuit of the markets, and been guided by it as strictly and peremptorily as its author professed to be by the sacred charter of the Constitution.

The tour of all these edibles Mr. Puffer made with the solemnity and thorough self-devotion which befitted the occasion. In his victorious progress he spared no dish; he entered into no truce or compromise with fish, flesh or fowl; he refused, with a sturdy love of self-enjoyment, to negotiate with any thing that stood before him whatever winning shape it might assume.

It was a glorious spectacle to behold Abimelech Puffer at his dinner. No wonder, three hundred human beings were willing to be packed, like damaged dry goods, into a small saloon. No wonder they volunteered a dollar a piece to get in. No wonder they patiently endured the heat and suffocation—in truth, almost purgatorial, of a close, narrow room! Abimelech Puffer at his

dinner was a sight Jupiter might have left his thunder, and Bacchus his cups to look upon.

Extravagant and improbable as it may seem, the Honorable Abimelech Puffer *did* at length finish his dinner—he absolutely brought it to a close! The wine was then introduced. The President thereupon arose, and, in his peculiarly small voice, said that "he felt himself highly honoured"—"Louder!" shouted an impudent fellow who had stolen an advance upon the meeting, of three glasses, "he felt himself highly honoured in being the instrument to convey to that respectable and intelligent audience, a sentiment which he knew would meet a cordial response in the bosom of every gentleman present. In presenting it, he should say no more than to simply add that the subject of it was a patriot, a scholar, an orator and a citizen, unrivalled in the four quarters of the globe. (cheers.) As a patriot he had given his time to his country for the last twenty-five years, at the very moderate rate of eight dollars per day (enormous applause); as a scholar, his pamphlet on the Tonawonda system of cultivating the prairies, had gained him immortal honour throughout the whole State of New York (ecstatic vociferations); as an orator, his great speeches on the Panama mission and on the question of conducting the debates in both houses of Congress in the Iroquois, have placed him in an enviable position before the world, beside Demosthenes and Cicero (hysterical hurrahs); as a citizen, you all know him, and love to know that his manly form is the growth—a true native plant—of your own soil!" At the close of this catalogue of Mr. Puffer's excellencies irrepressible cheers broke out, like an erysipelas, all over the meeting. The native plant, however, sate rooted to its chair very quiet and self-composed under this pleasant irrigation; or rather his face seemed to bud forth certain complacent smiles and twinklings which shot about his eyes and the corners of his mouth, like garden fire-works.

"Gentlemen," continued the President in his small, small voice, "I have the honour to offer you, THE HONORABLE ABIMELECH PUFFER. The phœnix of his party, he springs," "louder!" shouted the impudent fellow again, "The phœnix of his party he springs"—"louder!" cried the inexorable, impudent man, "I can't," exclaimed the President, pale with smothered rage: nevertheless he proceeded, "he springs from the ashes of corruption which surround him, and, like Hercules tears his" (sh-i-r-t suggested the

impudent, drunken man as the president paused in doubt over his paper) " his De-janeiras garment from him and springs into the flame to save his country."

This admirable and explicit toast was received with unbounded demonstrations of applause, and in about two minutes after they had subsided, the meeting took to their bottles and Mr. Puffer to his legs.

" Fellow-citizens," said he, calmly withdrawing a large bandanna from his left coat-pocket, " no event of my life is more gratifying to me than this reception: it is the proudest—the very proudest moment of my existence. The sentiment which you have had the kindness to receive so warmly—is only too complimentary, too flattering. To be a phœnix under any circumstances, gentlemen, must be highly gratifying to any man's feelings, but to be the phœnix of the party of which I am a humble advocate, is an honour too great—too overwhelming for any human being. I thank you, Mr. President and fellow-citizens, for the kind compliment, I thank you with all my heart, and from the bottom of my heart—but I feel—I fear—I am not sure but that I am unworthy of the eulogy." He then proceeded to handle the allusion to Hercules in a similar manner, and in due time came to his system—the great system of which he was the father and promulgator. " As to the system which I have had the honour to advocate—for the last three years—and which I have at length succeeded in carrying through both Houses of Congress by a triumphant majority (cheers). I allude to the system of Short Commons (continued cheering); the system which has routed beer shops from the Capitol and banished gingerbread establishments from the halls of legislation (vociferous applause); as to this system, gentlemen, which I victoriously brought to a third reading, and pushed to a successful decision after a hard-fought and exciting debate of two days and two nights—I shall not enter into its amazing results and consequences at the present time! Its moral bearing upon the destiny of the world—its influence upon the business of Congress—and the support which it indirectly and collaterally lends to the Constitution of the United States—are too obvious to require explanation."

Here the fourteen vice-presidents sprang upon their legs in a body and cheered in magnificent style—a fat reporter in a small gallery behind the speaker grinned—the meeting clamorously

hurra'd—and an elderly gentleman who couldn't get a seat and wanted exercise, put his hat upon his cane and whirled it around in the air, in a most fascinating manner.

"Mr. President, in urging this great measure upon Congress, I invoked the spirit of liberty to come to my aid—I felt it my duty to invoke that spirit; I called upon the fathers of the Revolution to appear before me, to stalk forth in their grave-clothes upon the floor of the House and animate me in the glorious cause." At this moment a noise of cracked bells and harsh voices from without volunteered to mingle itself with the sound of the speaker's eloquence. "'Appear before me,' I exclaimed," continued Mr. Puffer, "'ye heroes and sages, in your funeral shrouds and ghastly visages, and infuse the vigour of your presence into my bosom!'" A tumult was heard at the door—a slight crash, as if a panel or two were resigning their places in the door-frame—an officer's voice was raised in the uproar—and a dozen or two hard featured fellows rushed in—followed by a miscellaneous throng. They distributed themselves quietly through the gallery, and the speaker, somewhat astonished at this rough parenthesis in the proceedings—continued, suddenly abandoning the track of apostrophe, which he perhaps thought had been full speedily and promptly answered.

"My learned friend," said he, smiling upon the small-voiced President, "has spoken of me, in terms of kind commendation, as a patriot, a statesman and an orator. But, gentlemen, whatever gratification it may afford me to know that I have been able in my time and in the course of my life to render some service to my country in these capacities ("Cut that man's head off!" shouted the impudent man, who was in his fifth bottle); I feel—I know that my deepest source of satisfaction—that which gives me most consolation and solace, is that amid all the corruptions and debaucheries of party, I have been enabled to sustain my purity and remain an honest man!" An uproar of applause now burst from every quarter of the room, slightly seasoned and qualified however by the voice of a big, pale man in the gallery.

"Pay me for them Wellingtons you've got on, Puffer!" shouted the big, pale man, who appeared to be a cobbler, from his complexion and the earnestness with which he demanded an equivalent for the nether integuments of Mr. Puffer's person.

"The character of our country, fellow-citizens," continued

Puffer, again rapidly abandoning his train of remark to get on less perilous ground—"The character of our country has been to me a source of anxious attention."

"I'd like to have you settle for those plushes and silk vesting!" modestly suggested a little tailor who was leaning over the railing.

"This principle I brought from my cradle and shall carry to my grave—sustaining it here and everywhere while life is granted me."

"Couldn't you arrange our small bill for groceries, Mr. Puffer," shouted the impudent man, who proved to be the out-door partner of the firm of Firkin & Muzzy, retail grocers—"It's been running more than four years."

This was too much for the admirers of the Hon. Abimelech Puffer—"Turn him out—hustle him!" shouted fifty voices all at once.

"Pass him down!"

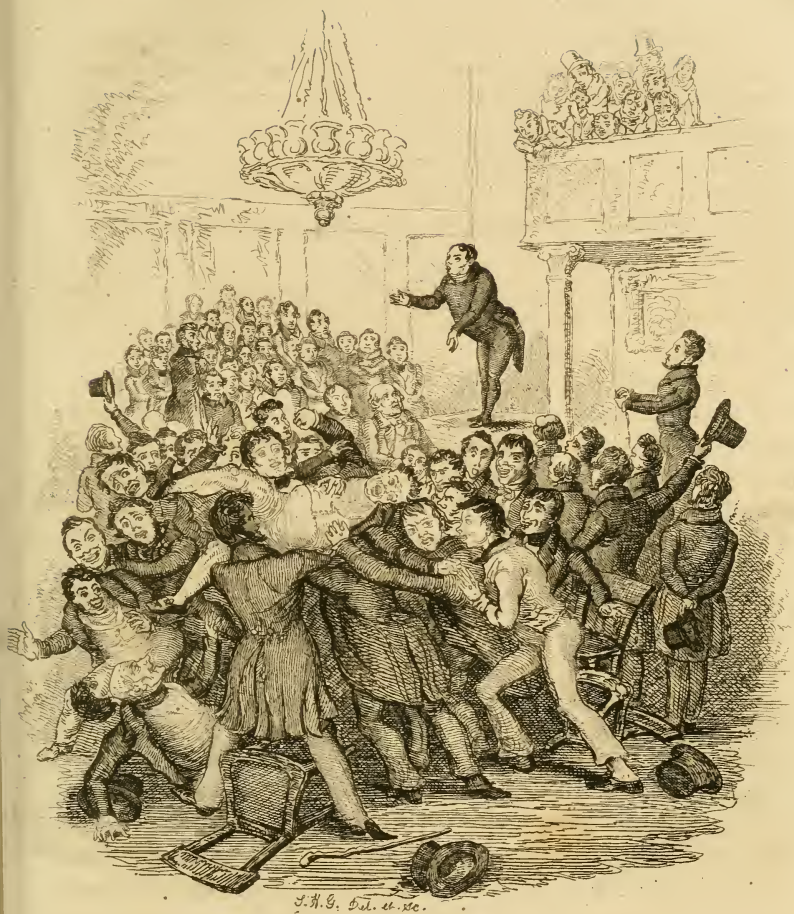
Now when it is considered that the doomed man had established himself in the remote upper corner of the room, and that the door through which he was destined to make his exit was at the opposite extremity, it will be readily perceived how pleasant a prospect of travel Mr. Muzzy might reasonably indulge in.

An assemblage of human beings is often compared to a sea.

Boisterous and dreadful indeed, was the ocean on which the ill-fated Muzzy was now embarking. God assoil thee, poor man! if thou passest safe through yonder narrow straits, ycleped, the outer door!

"Pass him down!" shouted a dozen voices at the lower end of the room.

In a trice, the call was answered by the sudden elevation of Mr. Muzzy some six feet in the air. Being let down by this billow he fell into a horrible vortex of stout-handed men, who whirled him round and round, and then yielded him to the current which set toward the door. He next struck in a gulf-stream of muscular fellows, who hurried him forward at something like fifteen knots an hour. Thus he pitched from one raging wave to another, sometimes being borne toward the right wall and sometimes toward the left, as the fanciful humour of the channel varied. Sometimes he landed among a party of quiet, elderly gentlemen over their wine, where he rested a moment, as it were, between two breakers, and looking around him with pallid visage, thought the tempest was past. In a second, the gale would spring afresh, and



The "hustling of Muzzy of the firm of "Firkin & Muzzy".

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he would be clutched up, and vexed dreadfully between two tides which both set against him with rapacious fury. At length he was caught up by a mighty billow, in the shape of two master bakers and a brewer, and dashed through the dangerous gut towards which he had been making such perilous progress. On taking an observation, he discovered that he was stranded on the curbstone, with his timbers considerably loosened and his rigging damaged. In fact, he found himself in a round jacket (instead of a long tail dress coat, in which he had entered) and frightened half out of his wits. Without stopping to fabricate any moral reflections on the event or to calculate the extent of his loss, he made a very rapid pair of legs down the street.

The Honorable Mr. Puffer resumed, and continued without further interruption to entertain the assemblage with an able and eloquent address, in which the words—my country—patriotism—our free institutions—(three cheers)—down to our posterity—received from our ancestors—(applause)—humble advocate—public career—the Constitution—the glorious Constitution—(six cheers)—enemies of human freedom trampled under foot (nine cheers)—occurred at regular intervals variegated with allusions to the personal determination of the speaker to stand by his principles, and all that. The Honorable gentleman sustained an even flight of this kind for about two hours, during which the fat reporter in the small gallery took the liberty to cultivate his somnolent powers with no despicable degree of vigour and enthusiasm.

Mr. Puffer was proceeding to introduce his peroration with nine apostrophes to liberty, and four distinct and astounding interrogatories to the crowned heads of Europe, when, suddenly and without notice the gas-lights extinguished themselves in a body. Upon this several clear and musical yells were raised by the hard-featured gentlemen in the gallery, and innumerable missiles began to be distributed pretty freely through the saloon. From the number that reached the Honorable Abimelech Puffer, that gentleman formed a sudden conception that he was becoming the general centre of attack, and that the whole meeting had risen to a man and was bestowing its favours upon his person.

The Committee having likewise arrived at a somewhat similar conclusion, they thought it came within their powers to smuggle the person of Mr. Puffer through the door in the platform—and they accordingly did so, with such a degree of precipitancy as to

draw the port-wine-coloured coat which he had on, entirely over his majestic features. The small-voiced president they threw in to make sure that all was packed snug below. The rioters not having learned the abduction of the honorable gentleman, continued to play their missiles towards the spot which he was supposed to be occupying, until at length a mis-directed bottle struck the fat reporter directly upon the nape of the neck and sent him home to write out the speech he had and had not heard—to say that "every thing went off in capital style"—that "the address of the Hon. Mr. Puffer was brilliant and thrilling, and surpassed all his previous masterly efforts"—and to have a mustard-plaster applied to his occiput! Champaigne-bottles, wine-glasses and broken noses, were meantime dealt about with the most astonishing prodigality in the body of the saloon, till daylight looked in at the windows—when the survivors adjourned.

Two of the Committee of reception, who had become personally responsible for the bills, on looking over the account which was handed in the next morning, and in which, "to breakage" —— doz. Champaigne-glasses; —— doz. wine-bottles, (best green glass); fifty window-lights; gas-fixtures; one large chandelier (entirely destroyed); figured conspicuously—and on receiving a note from the fat reporter, stating that he should immediately commence an action of damages for "the disablement of two arteries and one spinal marrow," unless some satisfactory arrangement was made—absconded.

When it is suggested that they left behind them two tailor's bills —a running account with a butcher and baker a-piece—and no chattels real or personal, save two or three walking-sticks and seven small children, it will be at once conjectured how enchanting a prospect there was of these new demands being met by cash payments!

THE DRUGGIST'S WIFE.

Harvey Lamb was a poor druggist in the city. He was very poor—his life ebbed on in a meagre channel, with a scanty tide that barely kept him from sinking. He was not born poor, nor had he become poor through unthrift or improvidence, but by one mischance and another—a misfortune—a loss at sea—an unexpected turn of events, he had been gradually brought down the fair mountain-side into the low vale of sorrowful and barren poverty, where he now dwelt. Whatever of flickering splendour—of past pomp or glory of condition had been left to him after all this, sickness, like a hard creditor, had stepped in and with her pale, slow, but inevitable hand, swept from the stage. The lights were extinguished—the curtain was torn down—the scenery (which, in truth, had been to him scarcely more than imaginary)—the fairy colouring and decoration of his boyhood, were vanished from his view. He was very poor, but not without consolation. His treasury of mere money, it is true, was exhausted—but there was one that presided over the exchequer whose resources scarce ever ran low. Fancy, a true poet's fancy, made a noble lord of the mint. She was ever ready to meet his demands—smilingly to give him bills and drafts (such as they were) upon the future. It was sufficient luxury for Harvey Lamb to live under the bounty of this generous dispenser. Grant him but life—life in its poorest, frailest form—and the free indulgence of his fanciful humour—and he was content. In the dungeon or the prison, he would have slept at ease—give but Fancy, sweet, radiant creature—for his jailer! He would ask no wider limits, than she could grant. He was very poor—but he had a faithful, fond wife. Mary Lamb was all that the wife of such a man should be. She was not a copy of her husband in every quality: her faculties were not necessarily matched, head and head, with his. On the contrary, Mary Lamb,

was, as it were, a continuation of Harvey Lamb—a pleasant supplement almost equalling in value the original volume itself—in which, whatever was dark in the first, was cleared up—whatever obscure, expounded—whatever weak, strengthened and sustained. She was just what a wife should be—not a rival to her husband—for that would be harsh and unmeet—a source of jarring discords and unfriendly sounds—but a sweet possessor of other powers—some lighter, some deeper—by which the double joy—the twin being of wedded life, was made complete. Oh! what a blessing is poverty, to spirits like these? It wrought upon them its triumphant miracles: It revealed to them the great secret how all-in-all two beings may be to each other, when they become nothing to the world, and the world is nought to them: for poverty, like fame, holds a trumpet in her hand, and with it summons from the breast the noblest strength and kindliest feeling of our nature. From the deep places of the heart great emotions—heaven-like attachments come flocking to the call of its sad music like sea-nymphs from the vast ocean, at the sound of "Triton's wreathed horn!"

Harvey Lamb, with his wife, lived in an obscure street, in a single small room, in the front of which he kept his little shop—a scanty assortment of drugs and vials. This was their only source of revenue. The business which was there carried on was of the most trifling sort; a fanciful, old neighbour, would now and then send over for a pennyworth of saffron for her canary-bird, or a dry, shrug-shouldered Frenchman up the street, would send down for a little brimstone for his dog—or, heaviest of his professional undertakings, he would be called upon to bleed an apoplectic alderman, who lived round the corner, fronting the Square. Thus year after year passed away. Harvey Lamb heard the din and tumult of the money-making world, but remained unmoved. Strange man! he saw the rich merchant crash by in his equipage, his face all wrinkled with care and erect with importance, and yet felt no ambition to take the road for wealth, to pant upon the course for the prize of plate!

Poor fool! he sate behind his counter scribbling poetry or dreaming it.

At length Harvey Lamb, was taken sick. At first it was mere weakness; but in a short time it assumed the pale-red guise of a decline. He was brought to his bed and bound there by the disease: and yet it was wonderful how Fancy still held her sway

—wearing her crown of flowers and waving her ivied sceptre with the same galliard and daring air, as in his hour of perfect health. His thoughts ran more sparkling than ever; his dreams were more populous with golden creatures; his visions came to him, freighted more and more with the perfume of the pleasant world of Faery.

"Mary," said he, one morning to his wife, who stood by his bedside, ministering to his illness—"Mary, I shall leave you no child as a legacy by which to remember me! When I depart, you will be alone in the world—alone without friend or comforter!"

"Oh! talk not so, my dear husband! Talk not so, you are child and father to me now, and I trust will remain so, ever and ever while we are on the earth. Tinge not your thoughts my dear Harvey with these sad colours of death!" She sank upon his face, and bestowing upon his lips a holy, fervent kiss, she sate down in a chair and wept.

"This is folly, Mary,'" answered her husband, "utmost folly. I fear not death: why should you. Nothing can be pleasanter and sweeter than death. To lie down in a retired, country graveyard, in a cheerful sleep, like that which the violets enjoy before they show their glad, fragrant faces upon the earth; to listen with a calm ear—if the dead may listen—to the thousand, busy sounds that Nature makes along the round surface of the globe, to hearken to these—the faint, gentle whisper of the spring grass, as it first shoots from the mould (noise heard only by dead and immortal beings)—the rustling of the lark's wings as he takes his morning farewell of the earth—the snake's gliding noise—the cricket's chirp—the fountain's bubbling harmony—these are the entertainments provided for us in our last home! Blessed—thrice-blessed tenement!"

"Long, long may it be ere you remove from this home to that—dingy though it be!" sobbed his wife, taking him by the hand, and gazing earnestly and kindly in his face.

"Oh Mary, fear not," he replied, "I shall visit you again. When I have left the flesh, nothing will please me more, as a disembodied spirit, than to re-visit my old haunts and my old friends. I shall come back, you may be sure, to see how you bear your widowhood. I shall look into the money-drawer, and learn if it has grown heavier or lighter since I left. You must leave the old dark sign, with my name on the door, Mary, so that I can find the shop!"

"You are talking wildly, I fear, my dear husband!" said his wife, who in spite of her reason, was carried along on the stream of his fast-flowing fancies.

"It will be so—it will be so," he continued, "I shall come back to see whether you grow old and sorrowful when I am away—to learn how time passes with you. I shall visit you in spring, for that is your cheerfullest season of the year. You must be in a joyous mood, so that I can tell how near like heaven, a pleasant face may make a little corner of the earth like this—look!—I shall return to find how our little neighbour improves with his violin; whether Mrs. Pegg's canary has got well of his new, everlasting cold—and to learn whether the moss in the eaves of the house preserves its green old youth as fresh as ever!"

Thus the sick man kept climbing an endless Jacob's-ladder, building pile of fancies upon pile, and descending each time, as it were with a face glowing with the hues of one who had for a while breathed a heavenlier climate and enjoyed a nearer access to the mysteries of the life that is to come.

The next day after this it was evident that the disease was beginning to triumph over his frame. He refused to allow a physician to be summoned. He wished to die in peace, with none to look upon his face but his fond wife, and no face, to mar the quiet scene of departure, but her's. When the discovery of the fatal character of his illness first broke upon her mind, she was overwhelmed. For a time she was stunned—and then, almost frantic with sorrow. But she was unwilling that one so near and dear to her should leave the world beholding her agony and distress. She would not disquiet his last moment (if she could) with a single uneasy or repining thought.

She restrained her grief and listened in silence, as her dying husband spoke of the parting which he felt to be near at hand.

"Mary," said he, looking fondly and with a melancholy smile upon his wife—"Mary, I hear the bell tolling for the departure of a poor man. For a day there will be a black thought upon the memories of a few kindly neighbours—my grave-stone as the newest in the yard, will be read for a week or so—and I shall have closed all my account with the world!"

As he spoke, a long, lean, spectral cat glided in at the door, and the sound of children at play upon the walk came in through the

opening—and the beat of a drum rumbling in a far-off street was faintly heard.

" I will close the door," said Mary, rising to accomplish her purpose.

" No, no," said he, " let me hear the sound of human voices. Let me have all the stir of life without, in its most joyous noises, as I leave : for where I go I shall find them all, only in purer and gayer shapes. Throw open the door, and the casement too my dear, I wish to look upon the flowers in the window across the way."

She stepped to the casement to gratify the dying man's wish—she lifted the window half-way up—heard a faint sigh—and turning found herself a lone widow in the desolate chamber !

That same day, towards the evening, Mrs. Lamb had been seen leaving the shop, with her bonnet and shawl. That night passed and she returned not. A poor boy, living in the neighbourhood had closed the doors and put up the shutters of the shop windows. The next day passed away, and the next, and no tidings were heard of the absent woman. On the third day it chanced that an uncle of Harvey Lamb's had come into town from the country, and calling at his drug-store was astonished to find it closed, and an air of gloom hanging about it and the whole street. When he learned that Harvey Lamb was indeed dead, he was still more astonished, no word of his illness having ever reached his ears before.

And now that the sad story was told in all its completeness, his duty was clear. He had the body properly prepared and provided with a coffin and, departing, took it with him into the country to lay it in his old, ancestral grave-yard beside his mother, his sister and his little brother, that had died many, many years ago.

On the Sunday of the next week, Mary Lamb returned, her hair disheveled, her dress soiled and her face haggard with fatigue, hunger and exposure. To many questions she answered not a word ; but entering the house and finding the corpse removed she gave one loud, piercing shriek, took a small bundle of clothes in her hand, and again departed. Choosing a street which led directly into the suburbs of the town, she hurried forward as if some matter of life and death hung upon her steps.

Crowds of people were on their way to church, and as she mingled with the stream and passed on, every eye was turned upon her in pity and wonder. Some of the more thoughtful and

compassionate would have stopped her and inquired into her trouble and suffering, but there was that of wildness and mad resolve about her look, which too plainly told that she would not be questioned, or that questioning would be fruitless.

The next morning she was seen crossing the fields beyond the skirts of the city, having passed the night God only knows where! Alas! how many poor wretches are there who appear in the morning and disappear at night-fall, whose hours of rest and slumber go by in unknown and pitiless places! How many to whom the sun seems to be their only friend, and who skulk away when he has set—care-worn, heart-broken—and hide themselves in haunts which the wild beast itself would shun!

Early Spring was beginning to gladden the earth, but the poor, desolate woman walked on, taking no heed of the sweet-scented buds that smiled forth along the road, upon which she was now travelling.

She had left the beaten turnpike for a moment, and taken the high bank which skirted close to the fence, and was strolling along the foot-path when she saw two or three boys in a tree over the stone wall, fixing a bird-cage among its branches. Getting over, she came under the tree, and exclaimed, looking into the face of a smiling little boy—the youngest of the three—

"Can you tell me, child, where Harvey Lamb was buried?"

The little boy instantly came down, and going up to the questioner, took her hand and said, "No, ma'am, but grandfather is buried over in that orchard;" and the child turned and pointed to a grave-stone in the far part of the orchard, a tear starting meanwhile into his sad little blue eyes.

"But Harvey Lamb's grave, child—I must find that!"

"Grandfather's grave is the only one near here," replied the boy. "He died before mother and sister and my two aunts—so he lies all alone over in the field."

The little boy's genuine kindliness had won the poor widow's heart, and drawing him to her bosom, she gave him a fond embrace, and wept warm tears to think that no such blessed pledge had been ever granted to her.

"There's a grave-yard by the church, good woman," said the boy, in answer to a second question of Mary Lamb, "come, I'll show you, ma'am, it's only up the road a little ways."

Saving this, the child took her again by the hand—led her

through the bars (which he let down) into the road, and up the road they journeyed about half a mile, when they turned down a lane, and in a moment more were in sight of the tombstones of a country church-yard. It stood upon a point of land around which a calm current flowed, lending to the neighbouring graves a type of that rest which none but the dead can know.

The little boy threw open the grave-yard gate, and exclaiming, "the sexton's in there now, digging a grave for old Billy!" scampered off back to his companions.

As Mary Lamb entered the burial-place, she heard a voice, apparently issuing directly from the bosom of the earth, singing—

Care not I
How deep they lie—
Five feet or five feet ten.
They've served their time upon the earth:
They've had their wedding and their birth;
Their frolic, holyday and mirth:
They'll serve their time below.
Care not I
How deep they lie.

On approaching the particular spot from which it seemed to emanate, and looking down into a pit some four feet deep, she beheld a little, bald-headed man, with his jacket off, toiling away, like a mole, in the earth.

"Can you tell me where Harvey Lamb is buried?" said the widow, asking her perpetual question.

"Not in my yard!" answered the little sexton gruffly, not deigning to look up.

"Pray, sir, can't you tell me where Harvey Lamb's grave is?" persevered the poor woman, something betraying itself in her tone which touched the little sexton's feelings.

"There's no Lambs buried in my yard," answered he; "nor there hasn't been a Lamb laid in, since old Billy Hubbard's father's grave was dug, and that was the first grave that was ever made here. And now I'm making a house for old Billy No. 2—old Billy's son. They was very quarrelsome in their lives, but now they're a-going to lay next to each other, as quiet as young sparrows. Death's a mighty leveller, madam," said the little sexton sententiously, now, for the first time, looking up.

"Gracious, my dear," exclaimed the grave-digger, as his eye fell upon the trouble-worn and mournful features of the poor widow,

"you look very pale. Have you lost any dear friend? Old Billy's no kin, I hope: if so, I beg your pardon." By this time he had lifted himself out of the unfinished grave. "Come along with me, whose grave was it you wanted to find?"

"Harvey Lamb's."

"Harvey Lamb's—some old uncle or ancestor's, I suppose," continued the garrulous and really good-humoured little sexton. "Come along—my wife may be can help you—she's kept a book of all the deaths and burials in these parts for twenty years, beginning with old Daniel Hubbard (Billy's father), and running down to an unweaned babe that died this morning of a small brain fever. Come along."

Across the disordered mind of Mary Lamb a hope now gleamed, that she might be able to find the object of her painful search—the grave of her husband. She was received very kindly by the sexton's wife, who, when she learned the melancholy nature of the poor woman's visit, immediately produced a soiled old blank-book, which she handed to her visiter.

Eagerly was it seized by the anxious woman, and hastily was it examined. "There's no such name there!" said she, giving it back to the sexton's wife, with a tone and look as if her very heart were breaking. "It's not there—I must begone on my business." She would have immediately gone forth and perilled the exposures and the damp and the darkness of another night spent in the cold air, had not the good old couple entreated her, with almost tears in their eyes, to stay with them until the morning at least. She did at length—taking her evening meal with them—and enjoying a slumber (broken indeed with strange images and phantasies of the brain) under their roof—but when the morning came she was up and had stolen away before any one was stirring of the sexton's household.

Day after day did Mary Lamb ramble over the country, putting to every one her constant question. The Death's bolt which had stricken down her husband, had pierced her heart beyond all remedy. From the moment when she had found herself a widow in the silent chamber, thought, reason, and restraint seemed to have abandoned her—desolate as she was before. The husband that she loved appeared to be ever gliding before her, beckoning her forward with a shadowy hand, and with that pale, sad look which was upon him when he died—upon the pilgrimage she had begun.

Onward she rambled with hasty steps—making herself familiar with the names of the dead in every village and country churchyard, and perusing the silent pages on which their departure was recorded with a mournful eagerness.

Sometimes, in the different parts of the country she had visited, a rumour prevailed that a mad woman had broken into a church and carried off the sexton's register. At others, that a wild female had been seen strolling about the fields, or sitting under the trees, earnestly perusing papers which she held in her hand, or tearing them piecemeal and scattering them along the lanes and highways.

One day she came to a quaker place of burial, and entering it through the gate, began her customary examination of the headstones, sitting down upon the green graves and reading the inscriptions, while her face was pale and flushed by turns as hope or fear predominated.

She had at length grown weary and, for a moment pausing from the task, sat down under the fence and commenced chaunting,

In the cold earth my love lies cold:
Oh tell me gently *where* he lies?
Is it beneath a flowerless turf—
Or do the blue-bells smiling eyes
Spread o'er his grave their cheerful dyes?
Where buttercups in golden colours glow
There lies my love asleep.
Lie still, my love! and till I come,
A calm, unbroken slumber keep!

It chanced while she was singing, that there was another person in the farther part of the graveyard—a venerable old quaker, who had come there to visit the grave of an only daughter, that had been buried the day before. The plaintive voice of Mary Lamb reached his ear. "Daughter, why dost thou weep?" said the old man, approaching her. "I have cause to mourn, for I have lost my only child—my dear, sweet Anna, the stay and comfort of my old age—but wherefore dost thou, so young and so lovely, weep?"

Mary lifted her eyes, and answered him with her customary old question, "Can you tell me where Harvey Lamb is buried?"

"It was of him, then, daughter, that thy verses spake! Lamb—Harvey Lamb—there are none of that name buried here; but, let me consider—there was a Lamb buried somewhere lately. Oh!

it was over at Mount Pleasant! a young man, I think, brought from the city—there was a strange story told of him."

"It was my husband—my dear, dear husband," cried the widow. "It was Harvey—he came from Mount Pleasant—strange that I never thought of it before—was it not?"

This was the first time that the idea of her husband's being buried among his fathers had crossed her bewildered mind, and she would have set out for the spot at once, had not the old quaker delayed her almost by force, and insisted upon her going home with him, and taking rest and food.

It was in the close of the afternoon, and the sky began to be overcast. In a few moments Mary Lamb and her companion were within his dwelling, just as, the first drops of the shower pattered upon the door-steps. The benevolent old quaker introduced her to his wife, and they sat down to the evening meal. The meal was finished, and Mary said that she felt wearied, and wished to lie down. The old quaker's wife thereupon conducted her up stairs, and led her into a neat, clean room, furnished with a bed, every appointment of which was as fresh as April snow. Bidding her a kind good night, the quakeress withdrew. She had no sooner left the apartment, than Mary Lamb slipped on her bonnet—cautiously opened the door—and gliding gently down stairs stole out of a side-door which led into the garden, and hastily surmounting the garden-fence, found her way into the open fields.

The rain was falling in heavy torrents—and a cold, damp, dreary night was before the wanderer. Broad flashes of lightning glared over the whole western horizon, and the thunder boomed and bellowed fearfully along the sky. Now and then a peal would begin far off, and rolling nearer and nearer with a heavy sound, as if a great chariot were driven across the heavens, burst with awful distinctness directly over the head of the lonely woman. A deluge of rain followed every discharge, and beat upon her person with pitiless strength.

Nevertheless she steadily pursued her course. She had at length rambled into a portion of the country with which her childhood had been familiar. She knew every road and turnpike and bypath as well as if she had travelled them but yesterday, and was thus enabled to make rapid progress on her perilous adventure. Thus for many hours she kept on, despite the rain, the lightning, and the horrid thunder. Nothing was before and around her but the dark-

ness, and yet a great, an animating, and liberal hope lured her on. Friendless and storm-beaten she pursued her dangerous path, without fear, without misgiving or doubt. She was not alone—though she seemed to be—for that shadowy form which had been the guide of her pilgrimage, was with her still, and with its sweet, sad face, invited her forward and encouraged every step. God bless thee, noble woman! for there will be an end to the weary journey —strange—mournful—but lovely and touching.

Morning at last broke upon her path. The storm had passed away, and the cheerful face of Nature was before her. The sky sparkled above her head with a clear brilliancy as if it had been purified by the flood that had descended. Tree and verdure, bird and blossom, bathed in the shower, assumed a new colour of vigorous and pleasant spring-time youth.

The genial rays of the sun shot through the air, and made the atmosphere soft and balmy, operating like a well-tempered bath upon the limbs, and bracing the traveller for her journey. With the new aspect of the morning, a brightness had come over the spirit of the poor widow, and she hastened on her way with a speed that seemed every moment to increase. She reached a road along which she had often trodden to school in her girlish prime of life; she saw the old school-house, and her heart beat with many fond remembrances. She came in sight of her own mother's house, where she had been wooed and won by the lover of her youth; her emotions were almost too great to bear.

She flew past it! She reached the old graveyard—hastily and tremblingly she entered its sacred domain. Her eye fell upon a newly erected grave-stone bearing the name of Harvey Lamb. It was his—her own dear husband's! She fell down upon the earth and wept!

There, for a long time, she lay senseless! At length a passer-by entered the graveyard, and looking into her face—for she had raised herself, by a convulsive effort, upon her knees, and turned it towards the inscription—with her hands firmly clasped—he found that she was, in truth, dead! Her heart had broken in delirious joy at the fulfilment of her hope; and she knelt before the plain homely grave-stone, like a devotee at the shrine of his saint. With many tears for her sorrow and her beauty, they laid her beside the husband of her youth!

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE N. A. SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF IMPOSTURE.

The friends of the N. A. Society for the Encouragement of Imposture mustered in strong force at the chapel gates at ten on a fine Monday morning in the month of April. It was delightful to see the number of sharp, shrewd faces that pressed for the doors the moment they were opened. There was a stamp on almost every countenance that proclaimed its owner a staunch, true friend of the cause whose first Anniversary was about to be celebrated within.

The chair was taken by "our esteemed and respected fellow-citizen" Mr. Solomon Chalker, whose long, saint-like visage is pretty generally familiar to the community, and in fact impressed upon the memories of many of them so thoroughly blended and associated with keen bargains and certain sly tricks of trade, that it might fairly be considered a stereotype. When Mr. Chalker deposited his person in a chair upon the platform, a murmur of applause arose from the assembly. In a few brief words he expressed his thanks for the distinguished honour, the Board of Managers of the N. A. E. I. Society had conferred upon him in calling him to preside over their deliberations.

Still deeper was his pleasure, still higher his gratification in occupying the chair in the presence of an audience so remarkable for their intelligence, their integrity, and their respectability as he had no doubt was the one before him!

He should endeavour to conduct the proceedings of the day temperately, firmly and in such a manner as he hoped would meet the approval of the audience, the members of the Society, and the Board of Managers!

During the delivery of this address, (which was received with flattering demonstrations) the chairman kept his two hands sturdily thrust in his side-pockets—apparently to be assured that his finan-

ces were in due order and safety—and a very judicious disposition of his hands it was, considering the company he was in.

He was surrounded by the Board of Managers themselves. At times too a soft sound was heard issuing from the mouth of his pocket, like the noise of metals clashing and jingling together, as if to keep the audience advised that the speaker was a respectable man and well-to-do in the world! Mr. Chalker arose a second time and stated that the First Annual Report would be immediately read by the Corresponding Secretary Mr. Boerum. Mr. Boerum accordingly dislodged himself from a high-backed chair and exhibited to the meeting a short man with a heavy solemn countenance, and unrolling a bundle of papers, satisfactorily established the moment he opened his lips that he had a voice whose tones could roll like low, distant thunder—growling and muttering over the heads of the audience. The Board of Managers instantly cast themselves into attitudes of profound attention, both hands griping their knees and their ears turned obliquely towards the Corresponding Secretary—as if they had not heard the Report read over by that identical pair of lips twelve distinct times!

REPORT.

The Board of Managers of the North American Society for the Encouragement of Imposture, in presenting to you this their first Annual Report cannot but be devoutly thankful for the degree of success which has attended their labours during the past year. The Board of Managers at a recent meeting resolved "That the prosperity which, notwithstanding contending difficulties, has characterized the Society, affords encouragement to prosecute its objects with increasing energy." Before we proceed to speak of the various efforts which have been made to promote the cause, your Board cannot but advert with pleasure to the spirit of harmony that has pervaded the different friends of Imposture in every quarter. The conduct of the retail dry-good dealers during the past twelve months has been highly cheering and refreshing. They have sold as appears by statistics in the hands of your Recording Secretary, during that comparatively brief space of time, no less than twelve thousand common ten dollar, red shawls at twenty-five dollars apiece as actual merinos! In addition to this they have disposed of two hundred and fifty pieces of sky-blue homespun as sea-green broad-cloth by the proper arrangement of the light in the back part of their stores!

Furthermore, so thoroughly have they been animated by the great principles of this Society, they have within the last three months, by unanimous consent, reduced the yard measure another inch, so that their customers are now furnished with thirty-four inches for a yard instead of thirty-five as had been the practice for some years past! The consequences of this measure, in the opinion of your Board, cannot be too eagerly and enthusiastically anticipated. It is destined to create an entire revolution in the manners of the community! The male members of it instead of walking about our streets in those extravagant long-tail coats and flowing pantaloons will now, by this dexterous change of measurement, be reduced to small-clothes! And the female portion, who have been so long habituated to fifteen yards per dress will now be forced to exhibit

their well-turned ankles and snow-white bosoms to the gaze of the world in fourteen yards and a quarter short measure! Your Board are very happy to be able to state, that this movement of the retail dry-good dealers has been cordially met and responded to by the merchant-tailors and mantua-makers. No resistance to this wholesome innovation has been made from that quarter. On the contrary they have given it their hearty and emphatic co-operation. The former, as soon as they learned this important movement on the part of their brethren, immediately enlarged their cabbage holes; and the latter, the lady mantua-makers, such of them as were single, were instantly married and made preparations for two girls apiece to be dressed in such fashionable silks as their customers may furnish during the next eighteen months!

The shoemakers throughout the city, and, as far as has been heard from, throughout the State, your Board have been gratified to learn, adhere with praiseworthy tenacity to their old and established habit of delivering their fabrics (such as boots and shoes) precisely two weeks after the time promised! While these particular cases have afforded to your Board subjects of the most lively contemplation they have been pleased to observe that the cause of Imposture is going forward with rapid strides in every part of our dearly beloved country. Its standard is planted in every road and thoroughfare, and flies from every housetop. Its drum-beat is heard all over the land summoning recruits, and rallying together the friends of sharp trade and large profit. Your Board are deeply penetrated with heartfelt pleasure in being able to state that several interesting cases illustrating the principles of of this Society have occurred in the intercourse of the United States Government and the red men; and in which the latter have been so signally over-reached and outwitted, that it is sincerely feared by your Board that they will never again furnish an example of the superiority of the white man over the Indian in natural cunning and profound roguery. The Board have had it under serious consideration for the past six months to establish agencies and branches of this Society among the Indian tribes for the purpose of promoting the cause of Imposture and supplying the aborigines with the elegant amusements of trade and trickery which are of so much more elevated a character than their untutored pursuits in the forest. It is the opinion of your Board that the Indians would make very good milliners, deputy-sheriffs and auctioneers. Their

taste in feathers—their keenness of scent and their exquisite voices would amply qualify them for these employments.

From reports which have already reached your Board they have reason to believe that the great cause in which we are engaged is making rapid progress among the native tribes. "The Choctaws" writes a firm friend of the cause, in April last, "The Choctaws have established a fashionable boarding-school among them for Choctaw young gentlemen. In this school I saw five Choctaw youths engaged in learning the Greek language—and going into a consumption. The cause is prospering; all that is wanted is more brandy and more benevolence."

With these flattering prospects before them your Board cannot but feel renewed zeal in the great cause in which they have embarked. On every side cheering and delightful evidences of the rapid spread and success of our principles present themselves to the eyes of your Board. One source of unmingled gratification your Board cannot with justice omit to notice—the vast increase of physicians and attornies. From this increase they augur the most favourable results to the cause. Whatever can be done to promote its advancement by administering wrong medicines and improper advice, by purging, as it were, the system and the pocket, and by fabricating respectable and not too moderate bills of costs and charges, will, they are assured, be done by the efficient and important auxiliaries to whom they have alluded. The number of mortgages galloped into foreclosure, of consumptive patients to whom stiff cathartics have been administered and of children who have been physicked indiscriminately without reference to the disease, is truly cheering and encouraging to your Board.

The efficiency and activity with which the Master-Builders have come up to the support of the cause also requires some notice at our hands. From an extensive and thorough inquiry set on foot by one of your Board we have learned that a method of building is now in practice throughout this city by which one whole side of the house is contrived to fall down some morning about two months after its erection, leaving the family pleasantly taking their tea on the remnant of the ruins. This system furnishes a very agreeable diversity in the monotonous course of married life and meets the cordial and sincere approbation of your Board. The Master-Builders have humbly inquired of your Board, whether the objects of the N. A. Society for the Encouragement of Imposture would be

best accomplished by having the defect in the timber or the brick-work: To enlighten your Board they suggested that when the timber shrinks, in nine cases out of ten a mere collapse takes place, a wall here and there sundering and a floor giving way, but that when the brick-work is laid with sufficient haste and feebleness, there is a very good likelihood of the roof falling in as the foundations are pretty sure of yielding. Your Board, with due deference to the objects of the Society and the wishes of its members, after mature deliberation, decided in favour of the latter plan as it furnishes the occupants of the building with a ready made coffin and saves the expenses of a funeral.

Your Board regret to state that in the midst of all this prosperity a cloud has obtruded: two of the members of your Board having been unfortunately hanged during the past year in consequence of miscarriage in two or three innocent schemes; one, a resident member, having been detected in an arson of a building containing a deed of a valuable piece of property given by him, but not on record. The other, who was a respected corresponding member of your Board in the Great Valley of the West, had the misfortune to be Lynched one morning before breakfast, having been detected with a large bundle of the "Impostor's Primer" upon his person, which he was preparing to distribute. Brother Snufflight fell a martyr to the cause, with the certificates of his zeal and his character in his hands! Thus have two of our associates been snatched from our midst; in the very prime of their usefulness. Brother Snufflight was twenty-seven the very morning he was subjected to martyrdom as appears by an entry in his journal "Twenty-seven this day. Heaven willing I shall consummate it by circulating the 'Primer' in large numbers—and distraining on the widow for the rent of the small brick-front in Scrabble street." Your Board have now brought their first Annual Report to a conclusion. They think they see enough in the results of the past year to animate you to renewed effort. The work truly is great, it is a mighty and gigantic one. Contemplate it in all its length and breadth, its depth and height—its majesty and beauty: And now that we have arrived at the commencement of another official year, will we not resolve that our course shall be marked by activity—zeal—fury—madness!—yes we repeat—madness and insanity in the great cause of Imposture! "Will we not" in the words of the lamented Snufflight "Will we not live, eat, drink, sleep with the mighty

cause of Imposture ever present to our minds. Will we not give ourselves up, body, soul and spirit, nerves, marrow and fingers to the giant business in which we have embarked. Will we not give our right hands to the altar whose sunlight has poured its torrents upon our benighted minds—that others may also see and be blessed!" Your Board cannot do better than commend these remarkable words of the dying Snufflight to your understandings, and request you to contribute liberally to the cause of which he was so distinguished an ornament, as there is a deficiency in last year's account (as appears by the Treasurer's Report) of one thousand one hundred and eleven dollars and twenty-three cents.

In behalf of the Board of Managers. J. Boerum
Cor. Sec.

The reading of the Report was frequently interrupted by intense and enthusiastic applause and at its close the audience gave a fresh round more vigorous and enthusiastic than ever. The chairman now rose and stated that the Treasurer's Annual Report would be read by Brother Pawket, Treasurer of the Society, and adjusting his spectacles he looked about the platform for the countenance of that excellent and skilful financier. To his astonishment the face of Brother Pawket did not at once present itself to his view. Several members of the Board of Managers now joined Mr. Chalker in the search and the eyes of the whole audience were directed with fearful anxiety toward the spot from which they expected the Treasurer to emerge. Brother Pawket was not in the house; a lad was instantly dispatched to his residence to tell him that the audience were waiting for him and his Report. In the mean time to occupy the attention of the meeting about fifty females in hats and half as many males in red, brown, white and auburn hair stood up behind the President's chair and began bellowing in concert the touching and effective melody "All round my hat," or something that sounded very much like it. Just as they concluded the boy came running back and rushing breathless up to the meek Mr. Chalker cried out "Mrs. Pawkit says as Mr. Pawkit's gone to Halifax—and sends her compliments and hopes the S'iety 'll make provision for 'er, as she's left a destitute wider!" Mr. Chalker was thunderstruck at this figurative announcement of the fact that the Treasurer had absconded—the Board of Managers turned pale with horror—and gloom pervaded the whole audience. The meek and solemn chair-

man however soon recovered the tone of his mind and, rising again, notified the audience that Brother Bibby was present and prepared to give them an interesting account of the state of imposture in foreign lands. With this, a middle-sized gentleman—with sable hair hanging over his back, like a hank of black yarn on a spinning wheel-head and brushed back smartly from his forehead—stepped forward and smiled agreeably to the meeting. He forthwith threw himself into the proper attitude in front of the desk. "Within the past year he (Mr. Bibby) had visited Kamschatka—the northern part of Russia—Hindostan and several of the Pelew Islands. From what he had seen, he was well satisfied the cause was triumphing in those regions of the earth. Dogs was horses, he was very happy to state, in Kamaschatka still; and in Hindostan widows was firewood. As to Russia he (Mr. Bibby) thought that Siberia was a delightful place, and continued to have an uncommon number of visiters; Siberia was *so* solitary and retired like, that it was just the spot for philosophers and gentlemen who loved meditation and spare diet. The Pelew islands continued to maintain their well-established character for native tact and a certain adroit style of entering ships' cabins and coat pockets, which was still epidemical in that quarter of the world. But in Siam (continued Bibby with great enthusiasm) in Siam, it was that he had been most profoundly astonished, gratified and overwhelmed at the success of the great principles of Imposture. He (Mr. Bibby) had seen in that favoured country, Elephants which would have done honour to this Society, to any Society! He had seen them apply their trunks in such a manner to the pilfering and purloining of fruit and other articles, as to give him the highest delight and which he should remember to his dying day. He (Mr. B.) thought this interesting animal might be introduced into different human employments with great advantage. They were possessed of natural powers which would fit them for many stations of trust and importance. Why (Mr. Bibby would ask) why could not several grown elephants be imported and dressed in leather hats and petershams and substituted in the place of our city watchmen? This was an age of improvement and he thought they would be very effective. Two or three large ones placed on wheels and intoxicated with cold water might be carried to fires instead of the Corporation engines. He would not suggest at present that any of them should be converted into hackney coachmen, although he thought they had a bullying air which would enable them

to extort liberal fare from their customers and they were also furnished with large ears to keep off the rain. He however, (Mr. B.) before he took his seat had one favour to ask which he trusted the Board of Managers would grant. He hoped he would not be trespassing upon their kindness in making this request. He was sure that in making it he was actuated by the best of feelings and the noblest of motives. (Intense anxiety now manifested itself among the audience.) He was confident that he had the good of the Society at heart in so doing. While in the lower part of Siam he had seen a white elephant with a grave face, throw his trunk gracefully over the shoulder of a missionary and pick his pocket of two bibles—three small testaments, a bundle of tracts and—a gin-flask! He wished to have that elephant elected an honorary member." (Thunders of applause for more than ten minutes, in the midst of which Bibby sat down.)

The chairman next introduced to the notice of the meeting Gustavus Cobb, Esq., one of those tall, slim, high shouldered young gentlemen in whose formation the necessity of a body has been entirely overlooked and who are consequently described as being—all legs. Gustavus Cobb *was* all legs, and looked like a lean ninepin in reduced circumstances. Judging from the slow, drawling manner in which he delivered himself, one might have sworn that Mr. Cobb had been brought up in the Post-Office. "He (Gustavus Cobb, Esq.,) appeared there as the representative of the Post-Master General. He was the nephew of the Post-Master General. He knew that his uncle was a friend of this Society. He himself was a superintendent of mail-routes. In the performance of his duty he had often ridden with the drivers, and from what he had observed he was morally certain that his uncle the Post-Master General was not hostile to the Society. Attempts had been made to turn the Post-Master General from his track. They had proved fruitless. The P. M. General, firmly convinced that a certain calmness and solemnity should be observed in transporting the mails, had not allowed himself on any occasion to pass any one else on the public roads. He (the speaker) had however seen one alarming case where an attempt had been made to fall behind the mail-stage in coming into a post town, and which proved successful. It was a decrepid old woman with a bag on her shoulder, travelling at a snail's pace on the Maysville turnpike.

"What are you carrying there, old lady;" shouted our driver.

"The mail!" answered the old woman.

"*I* carry the mail!" answered the driver firmly, endeavouring to drop behind the old creature.

"Yes!" screeched the awful hag "your's the regular—mine's the express!" And, do all we could, the driver was forced to get into the town some ten minutes before the old female opposition.

From a very extensive series of experiments the P. M. General is satisfied, that spavined old horses between fourteen and fifteen years of age make the best kind of mails. The liberal introduction of the use of this animal has had a charming effect on the mail arrangements throughout the country. The only objection that has arisen to them is that they are sometimes too expeditious, and evince a disposition to get through within the hour. I have heard it hinted, I will not say by my uncle exactly, that to obviate this objection the P. M. G. contemplates introducing donkies throughout the department—superannuated donkies. He thinks a superannuated donkey mail (judging from the comparative success of his old horse mail) would become extremely popular.

"The deliberation, the safety and circumspection with which letters might be carried by a Donkey Mail would recommend it to merchants and men of business; and the regular tardiness of its arrival and the slow moderation with which it would travel, would make a superannuated donkey mail an object of special favour among young gentlemen and young ladies, who are so fortunate as to be in love, and corresponding.

"His voice (Gustavus Cobb's voice) was decidedly and peremptorily in favour of a donkey mail! He was convinced that the whole country would rise to a man, in favour of a donkey mail in preference to the present post office system!"

At the conclusion of the address of Mr. Cobb, a lively gentleman in a green silk vest and nankeens was brought forward by the chairman and announced as Brother Windbolt—the distinguished Professor of all the arts and sciences, and proprietor of the Universal Institute of Knowledge.

"Sir," said the accomplished Windbolt, throwing back the right breast of his coat and delicately inserting his thumb in the armhole of his green silk vest, "Sir, I challenge the world to question my attachment to the North American Society for the Encouragement of Imposture! My fidelity to its great objects has, throughout my life, been kept in view with a steadiness which would make a bet

of one thousand dollars (which I hereby offer) a very unsafe one for him who should doubt my devotion to its interests. Sir, it is well known to you, and I presume to this community with what assiduity I have laboured for the last ten years, to lighten the pockets—to simplify the financial concerns of the inhabitants of this city. Heaven be thanked! the startling announcements which I have made in the public prints and by placard, of sciences to be taught by me in an incredibly brief space of time, have not been unattended with success. The incredibility of those announcements has been my salvation. The very impossibility of communicating knowledge as expeditiously as my advertisements promised, brought crowds to my door.

"Ringing the changes along the whole gamut of imposture—from the doubtful—the absurd—the improbable—up to the impossible and the hideously monstrous and incredible, I have found the number of my patrons to swell steadily at each advance! Or rather I should say that in running the higher keys of the scale I found my patronage to increase at an enormously accelerated ratio!

"On looking over my accounts, sir, in July last I discovered that my profits during the preceeding nine years had been so great as to justify my signalizing the event by some public celebration. Accordingly on the tenth of August, having provided ample and liberal accommodations I threw open the doors of my house, and gave (I hope I am not exaggerating in saying) the celebrated Windbolt Writing Festival!" Here the speaker was interrupted by thunders of applause which pealed from every quarter of the building, and which conclusively testified that the audience there present, considered the said W. W. Festival the most triumphant imposture of the day.

"Of that Festival, sir, I feel it my duty on this occasion to render some account. We all have a common interest in it. It was given for the benefit of our common principles. On the evening of the tenth of August last, then, at half past seven, sir, four large rooms—in the Universal Institute—two square and two oblong, were thrown open for the Festival. In one oblong room were stationed on stools at a large counting house desk, twenty elderly gentlemen in white inexpressibles and swallow-tails, prepared to exhibit in double entry, day-book and ledger practice: and an equal number of young gentlemen in blue-roundabouts actively engaged in algebra. In the square room adjoining this, five-and-twenty elderly ladies were seated at pianos, harps and harpsi-

cords. The second oblong room was occupied by the three Miss Windbolts in cottage hats and yellow frocks, representing the three graces, with their hair in curl: with a full bevy of young ladies prepared to perform various elaborate steps and figures which had been communicated in two lessons of an hour each. But the third room, sir, held the wonder of wonders—nineteen select youth who were to play one hundred tunes; square the circle; solve the longitude and lunch twice in the singularly brief space of twelve minnutes, by the watch. I will not conceal the fact that there was another smaller room, sir, and, in that room that Master Robert Windbolt (my youngest son) was elevated on a music stool prepared to eat gingerbread held in his right hand and scribble away with his left at a prodigious rate for any given length of time!

The festivities of the evening commenced. Twingle, twangle, thrum went the instruments: away flew the twelve couple of young ladies in a new highland reel—dash—like so many mad knight errants scampered the goose-quills of the twenty elderly gentlemen over their ledgers—furiously the young gentlemen in azure jackets flourished their pencils—square the circle—lunch—solve the longitude—lunch went the nineteen select youth to the sound of their own flutes and French bugles. Round and round, like a crazy planet, whirled Master Windbolt dispatching small text by the sheet and gingerbread by the square yard. Hilarity and animation pervaded the rooms: every body was delighted. The great festival bid fair to go off in glorious style when suddenly sounds of merriment, mingled with cries for mercy, reached my ear. They proceeded from one of the oblong apartments. I hastened to the spot and there, sir, I discovered a spectacle at which I was literally horrified. Solitary imprisonment is nothing sir—is a mere luxury—compared to the awful vision—oh that it had been a mere creation of the brain!—which met my eyes. Sir—I discovered the twenty elderly gentlemen, on their hands and knees—running the gauntlet in their white pantaloons, between the wide spread legs of the twenty algebraic youth who were bestowing inky ferules upon their vertebral extremities. Through the dreadful strait they navigated and wriggled like so many eels with their tails cut off; with my astronomical eye I discovered dusky orbs floating through clear skies of white-jean which skirted those middle-aged flanks! Sir, there was something captivating though still dreadful, in watching those venerable serpents—those respect-

able milk-snakes creeping in at one end of their fated maze and twinkling through, with nimble expedition, mapped all over with pitch-black rivers, torrents and ink-falls! I had scarcely recovered from the shock of this fearful spectacle, when I heard skrieks and shrill voices pitched in a high key, and a confused pother and tumult emanating from the remotest square room. Rushing breathlessly to that quarter I found two and twenty of the elderly ladies engaged in a promiscuous conflict with each other, aided and abetted on both sides by large numbers of the elaborate dancing misses. I was completely stunned Mr. President, I will candidly confess, by this horrible uproar on all sides. I stood stock still between the two apartments, where I could look upon the progress of events in both, and dialogue and observations like the following, fell upon my ear.

"Go it Jehosaphat!—Jehosaphat against the course! There's a flank, there's bottom for you my boys!" from the oblong room.

"This is my third quarter Kate Slocum, deny it if you dare! Pa! paid Windbolt thirty dollars, in advance, in timber lands at Neversink!"

"My husband had some schooling, I guess afore he was forty! I didn't teach my man his ab's and bab's, Mrs. Duncecombe! no I didn't—tho' some people—you know!"

"'Sicore Windbolt says you thought the harpsicord was a patent oven, when you first came here; and told her what a big box of dominoes she had there, when she opened the piano!"

These elegant specimens of objurgatory eloquence issued from the square room, followed in each case by a manual attack on the fair physiognomy of the speaker, and the involuntary discharge of certain facial ducts and arteries.

"Easy, easy—striped bass! hard on, Darby—lay on the tiller Jack—so, now we're through the Narrows!" cried a nautical voice in the oblong room; and the separate directions were accompanied with sharp, clicking sounds as of some thin, solid parallelogram of wood lighting on a certain quarter of the human body encased in tight smalls.

"Ten to one on the Leopard! Golly, Joe, he goes it like a tiger through a jungle of lightnin' rods!" shouted a second voice which was followed by a scrambling noise like that of a body in excessively rapid motion.

In this way the confusion and clamour was every minute increased. The great Windbolt Writing Festival assumed the ex

hilerating aspect of being metamorphosed into a Saturnalian battle of elderlies and youngsters. It is but fair to add, that three elderly ladies, who had been taking music lessons at the Institute for thirty-nine quarters, were serenely seated in a corner of the square room during the affray, assiduously strumming on a broken harpsichord and two single-string harps, with the benevolent purpose of calming the agitation of the parties engaged. I was also highly gratified, sir, on strolling into the small room where Master Windbolt occupied a stool, to find his three sisters, the Misses Windbolts, laboriously engaged in assuaging his grief; for, as he himself informed me, his gingerbread was all out,—he'd got the cramp in his right hand, and the screw had worked through the top of the stool and bored his hide and breeches ever so much!

After a while the tumult subsided; the young gentlemen in azure jackets had tired of their sport; two of the elderly gentlemen in ink-striped white-jean had rushed headlong out of the house ("stop that span of zebras!" I heard shouted in the street shortly after their disappearance); the old and young ladies had gradually subsided into that dead calm, into which the high winds of female passion are accustomed to fall after tempest. Thus concluded the Windbolt Writing Festival. I shall leave it with you and with this intelligent auditory, to decide my claims of fidelity and devotion to the interests of the N. A. Society for the Encouragement of Imposture, when I have stated, that of these numerous performers, the elderly gentlemen had taken four quarters' instructions—one hour and a half constituting a Windbolt quarter—in book-keeping; the select youth twelve lessons a-piece (twenty minutes making a full Windbolt lesson) in bugle playing, lunching &c.; the young ladies as many in the reel, fling and gallopade; and the algebraic young gentlemen seven quarters a-piece in equations, fluxions and trigonometrical science—all at the unprecedented rate, sir, of ten dollars the hundred lessons and five dollars for twenty quarters—payable in advance! I close, sir, by thanking this audience for their kind attention, and defying any person present to produce man, woman or child that has ever profited a single quaver, or fraction by attendance at the Windbolt Universal Institute of Knowledge!"

The speaker that followed Mr. Windbolt was a dark, heavy-browed, serious-looking individual who had spent the last half dozen years of his life in the elegant amusement of passing people to their graves through an agreeable process of steam. "He (Mr. Bludgett) had certificates and affidavits by which he could show,

to the entire satisfaction of the Board of Managers of the N. A. Imposture Society, that he had been in the habit for a good number of years past of steaming to death, at the rate of one old woman and two small children every week. It might not always" remarked Mr. Bludgett, with an amiable contortion of countenance that might have been borrowed from the devil's scrap-book, "It might not always be a literal old woman and two literal small children; but then the vitality extinguished by him, each week, would amount to about that. Sometimes it would be two consumptive young men, with tolerably good constitutions: sometimes three sickly married females; and sometimes his week's work would consist in disposing of a stout, healthy-looking man labouring under the delusion that he was deadly sick. He was quite sure—he was morally certain that with a sufficient share of public patronage, he (Bludgett) could despatch three grown men and an infant, or perhaps he might venture to say, three grown men and a tailor—per week. His baths were now in such admirable order—the steam was let off, and the fresh air let on—and the steam was let on and the fresh air let off, with such delightful precision and promptness that the business could be done in no time! He would venture to turn any number of patients the Society for the Encouragement of Imposture might see fit to place under his charge, out of this world into the next, at the rate he had mentioned. If there should happen to be a surplus in the Board of Managers itself, he would be very happy to convince any gentlemen that choose to tender themselves, of the efficacy of his system of practice!" Here Mr. Bludgett cast an awful leer upon Mr. Solomon Chalker as if nothing could be more perfectly captivating to his mind, than the idea of submitting his person to the steam process; the audience laughed; and Mr. Bludgett sat down with applause.

The chairman now arose, and thanked the audience for their attendance and attention to the exercises of the occasion, and named the day and place at which and on which the next Anniversary would be celebrated.

Then followed "Anthem by the choir, and collection in aid of the funds of the Society!" and the crowded audience dispersed. It is but justice to the Society for the Encouragement of Imposture to mention that a number of tin sixpences and sanded half-dollars were found in the plate, which were supposed to have been put there by the honorary members and friends of the cause, who were distributed through the house.

THE MERRY-MAKERS. EXPLOIT No. II.

CONTAINING A CRITICAL PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF MR. BOBBY-LINK, AND A DELIGHTFUL AQUATIC EXCURSION WHICH THAT GENTLEMAN TOOK IN COMPANY WITH MISS HETTY STEDDLE.

NATURE furnishes, now and then, a genuine comedy as full of love, bustle and intrigue, as one of Farquhar's or Congreve's. Seated by the side of a babling brook that pays tribute to a delightful lake of sparkling water, with a varied woodland sloping up from its banks, on a fragrant morning in June you may see enacted a gay drama, pregnant with lively scenes and noisy dialogue. Near by, on some neighbouring rail, two amorous catbirds chatter away in animated discourse, hopping along the fence in flight and pursuit—a precious pair of ill-dressed, vagrant lovers: while, far off on the edge of the lake, so that their puny heads are just visible, bobbing up and down, two friendly little snipes are paying their respects to each other over a dead water-fly. In a thorn-bush a sweet-tempered brown thrasher hurries through his joyous and flute-like song, as if he were afraid the day would be over ere he could disburthen half his music. The love-lorn king-fisher hangs on a dry bough over the stream, and brawls in his harsh, startling voice, determined to outroar the current, and keeping an eye fixed sharply on its surface: the moment an unhappy fish becomes visible this aquatic bailiff springs upon him, fastens a talon on his shoulder, and hieing to a retired quarter consoles himself for the absence of his mistress. Meantime, far up in the depths of a wood in a green glade, a tall crow, gloomy and self-absorbed, stalks about—the artful villain of the pastoral scene; and midway, in the crumbling body of a dead ash tree sits an old owl, with his broad, goggling eyes, and the dry, white moss gathered about his politic pate like a full-bottomed tie-wig, looking as wise and grave as a judge—apparently deliberating in his own fusty mind what penalties to inflict on the cheerful creatures that are flitting and

chatting and making themselves happy about him. If from his position, the observer could cast a glance towards a low fence that runs along a flat meadow to his left, he might discover a sleepy night-hawk dosing on the rail, blinking out of one eye and striving, like a conceited politician, to make it appear that he sees more with his single optic than most people with two, and that "he can look as far into a mill-stone" as the wisest. Over this profound thinker a troop of piratical blackbirds are on the wing—hovering a little in their flight, perhaps to watch the erudite Sir Hawk knocked in the head by the first country boy that passes with a gad—with a mill-pond hard by in view, screaming and babbling and uttering all kinds of discordant noises, for all the world like a band of roving musicians twangling and sounding their way to a fashionable watering-place. To complete this little rural enterment, in a buckwheat field beyond the lake, a single stout-hearted quail sits calling (as if giving the prompter's cue for a favourite performer to come on) loudly and enthusiastically for "Bob White!" Of course Bob White, although thus earnestly invoked, disdains to appear; but Bob Bobbylink is reclining in the midst of the many-coloured scene I have described, with Mistress Hetty Steddle, the pretty serving-girl at his side.

They were seated on the bank of an impetuous little torrent, with a light fishing-boat near at hand, fastened with a cord to the stump of a tree in a cluster of bushes, and straining on its cable, with the heady current that rushed into the lake, like a violent horse dragging at his bridle. A pair of oars were lying on the bank.

"Come now Hetty," said the fascinating Bobbylink seizing the young lady's hand, and giving it a fervent pressure, while he arranged his face in a melancholy, half-smiling oblong "Come now Hetty, don't refuse—say next Thursday and make me as happy as a robin in a cherry tree."

"But why not wait Robert, till your grandmother is dead?" responded the young lady with an arch look, "You know you'll have a nice little property then, and that will make us comfortable—What odds are a few days or a few weeks?"

"Good heavens! how you talk girl!—my grandmother's only seventy, and her mother, my great-grandmother—lived till she was a hundred and one, within a day. Why they're a regular brood of she Methusalahs!"

"Old women can't live forever," retorted Hetty "and when you heard from her the other day they thought an east wind would carry her off."

"You can't depend on that race of old ladies a minute: to day they'll be looking thin and ghastly, with a 'good-bye to you all,' written as plain as large text on their features—and a whole mob of cousins and grand nevys and nieces swarm round the old woman, peering into her face like a parcel of farmers in harvest, staring at a wet moon: Every one thinking the old lady's passport for the next world is made out and filled up. The pretty nieces run over in their mind how many yards—she being a long-limbed body—it will take for her shroud, and the charming grand-nevys and cousins are busy putting out their legacies on compound interest."

"Dreadful, inhuman wretches!" interposed Mistress Steddle with a look of horror.

"The next day," concluded Bobbylink "she gets up from her dying bed and says with a smile, that she can't leave this world until she has seen some of her great great grand-children (that are now infants) grown up and married: and 'gad I believe the old creature will keep her word!—so Hetty you *must* say next week, or postpone it till we're both gray!"

"Now Robert," said Hetty "I am going to ask a great favour of you. Do you think you can be liberal enough to grant it, mind—it's a very great favour I give you warning!"

"Anything, my dear Hetty—you can have anything of mine you ask—even my life."

"No, I don't want that—I shouldn't know what to do with it—my own little wicked life is as much as I can manage."

"What is it—ask quick, and I grant at once! What's the mighty favour you desire of Bob Bobbylink?"

"To tell the perfect truth without a joke," answered Hetty smiling "isn't this entire story about your Jersey grandmother made out of whole cloth? spun on your own wheel, with your head for the distaff and your tongue for the spindle? And didn't you contrive it from fear that young Jolton would carry off Hetty Steddle from you on the back of his property; and as you were pennyless, you matched him by throwing in a snug cantle of a farm in the Jersies?—Out with it Robert—don't let the truth choke you, although it isn't used to trav'ling the Bobbylink turnpike."

"Hetty you're a shrewd girl, and you've guessed right," an-

swered Bob Bobbylink laughing "If I have any grandmother in Jersey she han't much love for her kin, for she's never notified me of her existence and Iv'e had two grandmothers buried already. That's as many as I'm entitled to by law—'specially as my parents never married but once a-piece!"

At the conclusion of this honest confession the young gentleman and young lady burst into a hearty fit of laughter, which having lasted the proper time, Hetty Steddle exclaimed, with an air of great seriousness, "Bobbylink!—now what do you think you deserve for deceiving a poor girl in this way? Do you suppose I'll have you without your property! in this part of the country cows aren't bought for the sake of their horns, but we're willing to take the horns because we can't get the cows without 'em.

"Very well," said Mr. Bobbylink with a rueful aspect "If you can desert me now Hetty—there's Polly Todd will take me without a copper and bring me hard cash besides!" Robert Bobbylink Esqr. chief of the clan of Merry-makers was, by reason of a tolerably good-looking person and a sprightly wit, a great favourite among the rural young ladies, and the one in question, Miss Polly Todd, had conceived a desperate attachment to our worthy. She was a professed rival of Hetty Steddle, and the mention of her name produced a fluttering sensation in the bosom of the latter.

"What if Pol Todd can bring you a few dollars," she said "perhaps others has got money as well as her. There's old Hetty Pease is worth twice Polly Todd and her whole generation."

"What of that?" asked Bobbylink.

"Perhaps Hetty Pease didn't die last night—and didn't leave all her earnings, by will, to her poor good-for-nothing name-sake and foster-child, Het Steddle!"

"You dont' say so Hetty?—it can't be—it's too good to be true!" exclaimed Bob Bobbylink rapidly.

"But it is so," answered the young lady bursting into tears, and throwing herself into the arms of Bobbylink "the poor kind old woman is gone! and it's all yours Robert—take it all and me with it!"

Robert Bobbylink, was not a little affected by these marks of affectionate tenderness both towards himself and the dead, on the part of Hetty Steddle, and pressing her to his breast, and imprinting several eager kisses on her fair face he said, "Cheer up, my dear girl—all will be right, pennyless or rich—in health or in sickness—

I'll take you Hetty—as to Mrs. Pease, you needn't grieve about that—'old women' you know, according to a high authority 'can't live forever!'" At this unexpected quotation of her own sagacious apothegm, Hetty could not refrain from laughter, and in a few minutes her pretty countenance entirely cleared up and wreathed itself in its wonted smiles. After this they conversed a long time earnestly together. Hetty, at first, urged that respect to her deceased friend demanded that the solemnization of their nuptials should be postponed at least a twelvemonth. To this Bob Bobbylink responded, that in her present situation, immediate marriage would be perfectly proper; she had come into the possession of considerable property, and could not, he insisted, with any degree of self-respect, remain longer at service. If she abandoned her present home, where in the wide world could she find another—now that her last relation had gone the way of death.

By arguments like these, Hetty's repugnance was finally overruled.

"Now, if you'll grant me a single favour, Robert," said she, "I'll consent that the—" here Hetty blushed like the goddess of Liberty on a village sign-board painted by an artist, whose palette lacks all the other colours of the rainbow but red, "that the—the—it shall be next Thursday week."

"Certainly," said Bob smiling and highly delighted; "I'll grant anything Mrs. Bobbylink asks. What is it my pretty yellow-bird?"

"Your pretty yellow-bird, Robert, how is that? I hope I haven't the jaundice this morning!" said Hetty, laughing. "But, to the purpose—you must discard that clumsy fellow, Sam. Chisel!"

"What that great dunce! why it's done before it's asked; a heavy, woodcock-pated lout, that has attempted my life any time these past three years by his infernal long stories and stupid jokes. Sam. Chisel! I'll make a horse-block of him, Hetty, if you want me to, and cut his long ears into patterns for saddle-covers if you ask it."

"And Habbakuk Viol."

"Let him go too."

"And Harvest."

"Off with his head—they're a pair of barren knaves, that for some mysterious purpose have been born with mouths, without the wit to get anything to put into 'em; and backs that would go bare,

begging your pardon, as a new laid egg, if they hadn't had a friend in Bob Bobbylink. Let them shirk from this time forth, for themselves!"

"Well," continued the inexorable and victorious Hetty Steddle, "there's Tom Snipe. He goes of course—the poor wretch that he is."

"Tommy! Why Tommy's a harmless critter, and might be useful in doing chores about the house."

"Don't mention him!" exclaimed Hetty, "I can't bear the sight of him; he reminds me so much, with his warped visage, of a lean kitten in a fit. The scamp absolutely attempted to kiss me once!"

"Away with him then! away with him!" cried Bobbylink with animation.

"Discharge Smally, now, and you've done a good morning's work."

"Poor John! never—never," said Bob Bobbylink with sudden enthusiasm, "he has been always true to me, and it's but fair that I should be always true to him. You may strip every branch and limb off of the old tree—and welcome, but that leaf hangs, and all the tempests in the sky may blow, and the old tree may rock and quiver to its very roots, but I tell you that leaf shall cling to the last. John Smally—my own right hand man—it's impossible, Hetty!"

"He is always flinging his jokes at one; and he has even snickered at you, before now," continued Hetty, hoping to touch Bob's personal feeling.

"I don't care for that," he answered firmly; "he has a right—for many's the crack I've had at his expense. Come, Hetty, spare me one! You had better try to drive Burdock's brown mare in single harness, or knit stockings out of bulrushes, than get me to forego my old friend, John!"

Hetty had by this time discovered, from his tone and manner, that Bob would not relinquish this last of his merry comrades, and desisted from the attempt, for the present, but not without a further request.

"Now to finish the weeding and make a clean garden of it, there's another promise to be made: you must leave of Shekkels, the man in the mask, the bull's horns, and all your other mad capers and carryings-on. D'ye understand—if you don't I shall have you a'vertised as a 'stray', the first thing." They both laughed heartily

over the pleasant reminiscences which Hetty's allusions conjured up, and Bob Bobbylink (with a liberal mental reservation in favour of stone-frolics, christmas shooting and black-fishing) granted her reasonable request, that he should become "a good, sober man about the house."

"But stop, my dear," said he, "there's a favour you must bestow on me in return for all this."

"What's that, Robert?" said Hetty, blushing, and supposing he hinted at a kiss.

"You must let all these poor dogs come to the wedding; it will be for the last time, and it would break their hearts to shut them out!"

"Well, well," answered Hetty complacently, "I suppose it must be so—although I think it would be a slight waste of cheap crockery if all their hearts were broken in a row."

"Now," said Bobbylink, rapturous with the unexpected success of his suit, capering about the grass, and ever and anon kissing and embracing his fair mistress, "now, Hetty, I think we can take our sail down the lake with some comfort; come, jump in!"

Obeying his injunction, she sprang lightly into the boat; at this moment the cable was unloosed by an unseen hand from its fastening and Bob Bobbylink, gasping with astonishment and surprise, beheld his ladye-love floating, alone, down the rapid current. Hurrying along the bank, and keeping even with the boat, he reached a rock that jutted into the water, and as the vessel glided by, he succeeded in throwing himself on board. A violent eddy seized it and hurried it out into the middle of the lake, and bore it swiftly away towards the opposite shore. In his trepidation and haste Bobbylink had forgotten the oars, and they were in a light and feeble craft without any means of directing its course, or providing against accidents that were likely to occur. To render their situation still more dismal and perplexing, they heard every now and then, a hoarse laugh sounding in the woods and echoed and re-echoed by the cliffs along the shore of the lake. A superstition prevailed in that quarter of the country, that a spectral personage whom they styled the Laughing Devil, roamed constantly about these woods, and gave token by a harsh, startling laugh or chuckle of danger impending over the neighbouring inhabitants. Ploughboys on their way home through the woods, after nightfall, pretended to have seen a short, burly creature with a grisly beard

and stiff shock of jet-black hair, standing in the shadow of a stunted ash tree or dwarf-oak, holding both his sides, with his face distorted by laughter which he seemed to suppress by main force; and which, when they reached the edge of the forest, would burst from him with great violence and startle them like a near peal of thunder.

An idle fellow who spent much of his time in wandering about the swamps and low grounds of this region with his gun, asserted that more than once when he had raised his fowling-piece to his shoulder, and was on the point of levelling it at a wild pigeon or gray squirrel, he had been horribly alarmed by seeing the bird or animal suddenly moult its feathers or hide, which fell to the ground like the cast-off slough of a copper-head, and in the twinkling of an eye become transformed into a robust goblin, who leered upon him, from amid the leaves with a countenance distended with laughter, while tears of mirth flowed copiously down his wrinkled cheeks. His gun, this vagabond sportsman added, would inevitably be out of order in a day or two after the vision, and miss fire a dozen times or more in succession, if the powder was in the least damp! However this might be, it was a well known fact, that just after a thunder storm this mysterious sound was sure to be heard loudest, and they often found immense trees riven to the very roots, and lying maimed and prostrate upon the earth, in that quarter of the woodland whence it had issued. If the grain was blighted, or a foal lost, or a sheep missing, that long, fiendish peal of laughter was heard echoing and ringing through the woods, and the birds took to flight as if from some dreadful object of terror and alarm.

The sounds which reached the ears of Bob Bobbylink and his companion at the present time seemed, therefore, peculiarly awful and ominous. To increase their anxiety, they thought they saw faces, ever and anon, thrust from among the bushes and grape-vines which overhung the banks, grinning and moping with aspects more like those of malicious spirits than of men. This might have been phantasy, but they swept straight onward and were in the utmost peril of being dashed headlong against a rock that projected into the lake, when suddenly a boat shot from within its shadow, and making for that in which Bobbylink was seated and running close by their side, one of the persons that occupied it gave Bobbylink's boat a forcible turn by the bows and pushed her out into mid-channel. Bobbylink now observed that the strange boat was held by four

men. On closer inspection he discovered that they were persons with whom he was acquainted, and with regard to whom he had been making sundry very liberal promises, during the morning, to Miss Hetty Steddle.

The boat of the four new comers now began to play about Bobbylink's; and its occupants threw out, as they flashed athwart her bows or alongside, observations like the following; much in the same way as a frigate skirmishes about a crippled seventy-four, firing a broadside at each evolution—reloading—and coming up on the other quarter with a fresh discharge. "Ha! Ha!" cried one of them exhibiting a broad countenance distorted with laughter, "That stupid dunce Sam. Chisel, sends his compliments to you, Mr. Bobbylink and hopes it's a fine morning for sailing. He presents you a brace of heavy woodcocks," giving Bobbylink a blow on either side of the head with his open hand as they crossed the stern, "and sends you a tumbler of the fresh fluid to wash 'em down?" He followed his last observation with the discharge of a boat-horn full of water from the lake; each one of the four being supplied with a short weapon of that kind, which, as every one knows, consists of the horn of an ox attached to the extremity of a wooden handle, and is used in our sloops and other river craft, to wet the sails.

"Any word to send to your friend 'Bak Viol," said another of them "he's in a famishing and dreadful state, having a mouth, without the wit to get anything to put in it. Do send him a drop of water and a kind word, if no more." And this gentleman playfully repeated the baptismal ceremony performed by his friend Chisel.

"Take that," exclaimed a third, a little man with a dry visage, punching Bobbylink with the butt-end of his boat-horn in the back and ribs, "take that from that harmless critter, Tommy Snipe!" and this, mistress," dashing a hornful of water into the face of Miss Steddle "there's something to cool your kitten with, when she's in a fit! ha! ha!"

"As for Harvest, let him shirk for himself," said the fourth, "he's a poor, bare-backed animal, and is of no more value than an old rain-spout," accompanying his words with a copious commentary of an aquatic nature.

Wheeling the boat about, and discharging small shot like this they at length seemed to have wrought the sport to a climax, and

at a signal given by Habbakkuk Viol, they prepared for its consummation by each filling his boat-horn to the brim.

"There Bobby," cried Habbakkuk discharging his piece, "put that in your pocket and keep it to sprinkle your first-born with!"

"Young lady" shouted Sam Chisel, "them nice, buddin' roses on your cheek, wants waterin' a little!" and he supplied the deficiency forthwith.

"'Linkem!" exclaimed Harvest "I don't believe your coat's ever been spunged, that," throwing the contents of his boat-horn on the collar and skirts of his upper garment, "that does the business for you!—and there's a little of the rock-crystal to drink your tailor's health in!"

"Miss, how's them colours on your gown—will they stand the water?" said Tommy Snipe, instantaneously applying the test to which he alluded.

"Maybe your pockets is dry," suggested Sam. Chisel insinuating a couple of hornsful adroitly into that quarter of Mr. Bobbylink's dress, "they're gapin' like oysters for a drop o' drink."

"What a nice water-proof Robert's got on this morning," exclaimed Viol, testing the hatter's assertion recorded in the lining, by a small artificial shower. "Warranted against thunder, lightning, and rain!"

"Why Bob, you look like a pond-duck, in the equinoxial!" said Sam. Chisel, "is that your mate Bobby—if so it be, her feathers want purifyin'!"

"Judging by the crook of his nose," continued Hank Harvest, "he looks more like a fish hawk," and again emptying his boat-horn, "he should get used to his adopted element!"

Now with a grand and general discharge of their pieces as they discovered that they were nearing the opposite shore, and the idea flashed across their minds, that if Bobbylink and his companion, were once landed, they might annoy them pretty seriously from the banks, they altered their boat's course and shooting athwart his bows plied their oars for the other end of the lake.

"There Mr. Bobbylink," exclaimed Viol, as they parted company, tossing him a farewell beaker of the fluid, "I advise you to save that to wash your face with, the first time it's clawed by Mrs. Hetty Bobbylink!"

"And don't forget to make me a pair of saddle-covers out of Sam Chisel's ears—when you catch him!" shouted the proprietor of

said ears, grinning monstrously, and playfully projecting a jet of water into the mouth of Bob Bobbylink, which stood agape with astonishment and terror.

During all these manœuvres, which had been executed within a brief space of time and with admirable dexterity, Bobbylink had retained his seat, half inclined to kindle into a horrid passion and half determined to burst into a hearty laugh, and take it all as a good joke. To be sure when he looked upon his fair mistress and saw her new figured silk drenched with water, he was sorely vexed and discomposed; but he had brought, he well knew, the whole catastrophe upon them by his hasty promise to discard his old friends and cast them loose, in the very first hour of his prosperity and success.

He therefore felt bound, in conscience and honour, to bear it cheerfully, and accordingly he had no sooner handed Hetty from the boat than his lungs exploded in a genuine and honest cachinnation, in which he was instantly joined by Miss Steddle, that young lady enjoying a very pretty sense of the ludicrous and feeling, with her worthy associate, that she deserved it all.

Pleasantly laughing over the whole scene, they seated themselves upon a wall in the sun, and speedily drying their garments, started off to gather blackberries instead of tempting a second time, the unlucky element.

DISASTERS OF OLD DRUDGE.

CONTAINING THE UNLAWFUL IMPRISONMENT OF AN OLD GENTLEMAN; A POPULAR BATTLE BETWEEN TWO ATTORNIES, AND A FEW PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE IMPROPRIETY OF OLD GENTLEMEN BEING OUT AFTER DARK.

The village of Plumpitts stands at the head of a vile little creek, which runs in and out from the Sound with the tide. Unfortunately, the tide has a propensity to be out oftener than in, so that Plumpitts, for the better part of the day, sits like a great duck, stranded in the middle of the mud. The inhabitants of Plumpitts are of two classes: those who belong to the river interest and those who belong to the inland interest. The former, consisting of two rival sloop captains, half a score of vagabond boys and idle-looking men who assist the said captains in navigating their craft to the city; and the inland interest, consisting of half-a-dozen shopkeepers, and as many pestilent old women; the former of whom spend their time in retailing sugar and starch to customers from the interior, and the latter in wholesaling scandal and small talk to each other—and a very thriving trade they make of it. The standing population of the village is composed of about twenty blue-nosed topers who hover about a place called the Point, like so many noisy gulls, during the early part of the morning and towards night, and pass the rest of the day in dirty fishing boats along the shore of the Sound, solemnly engaged in capturing black-fish and bass for their present wants, and providing a stock of cramps and rheumatisms for their old age.

About three miles back of Plumpitts, there lay an ill-conditioned piece of land and a dilapidated old house, which altogether was entitled the Homestead: and in a small room in the old house, a sharp-faced, gray-eyed little woman, and a red-visaged man, some

two sizes larger, were seated at a breakfast table. The little woman sat erect and was engaged with toast and coffee, and the man was bent nearly double over a bowl of sour buttermilk, and a white earthen plate, holding a single, small perch or sun-fish, burned to a crisp.

"Drudge!" cried the little woman, sharply.

"Ma'am!" answered the red-visaged man, timidly.

"You know I own this farm?"

"Yes."

"And this house?"

"Yes;—and the span of horses, and the family carriage!"

"Very well—And all the ready money—do you know that?"

"Oh yes," responded Mr. Drudge, in a faint voice.

"And that you brought nothing but an old saddle, when I married you?"

"Yes ma'am."

"How dare you then eat fish and buttermilk together, contrary to my express orders. Yes—how dare you—you miserable pauper!" shouted Mrs. Drudge, working herself into a sublime frenzy.

"Dear Tishy—I thought there was no harm in it"—

"Don't Tishy me—don't dear me—you object!"

"You know I caught the perch myself," humbly suggested her red-visaged victim.

"I know you did—you poor creature—when you ought to have been home minding your business. You havn't split your day's oven-wood yet, nor milked, nor brought water, nor churned—you've done nothing this morning, Drudge, worse than nothing—oh, you poor lazy thing!" And she gave the poor man a glance, which if it had been half a degree fiercer, must have inevitably scorched him to a cinder. At this moment, a heavy-headed country boy thrust his face in at the door, horribly distorted with terror and bad news, and cried out, "Buzbee's red bull, missis, has just busted into the corn, and our sheep has just busted out of the long lot into Buzbee's woods—and the devil's to pay all over the farm!"

"There's more work for you, Drudge!"

"Oh yes!" rejoined that gentleman, adopting his customary reply when he had nothing better to say.

"Why didn't you look after that fence? I told you Buzbee's bull would be over before a week's time. And why havn't you penned the sheep as I ordered you a month ago?"

The heavy-headed boy here returned and interposed.

"I forgot to say, missis, that the storm last night 'as washed away the little barn—and missis' carriage is buried in Blind-brook half full of mud, and two-thirds o' water!"

"My God!" cried Mrs. Drudge, in a sudden paroxysm of anxiety, "I thought it would be so Drudge; I thought it would be just so. You wouldn't move that barn further up on the bank, no you wouldn't—though you might have done it, if you'd strained yourself a little, with Moe's help. Good Heavens! I'm afraid the carriage is ruined, and I wanted to use it this very day—good Lord!"

"I think it might be got out, missis," continued the heavy-headed youth, "if Mr. Drudge would be so good as to give me a lift." The heavy-headed youth smiled profoundly, as if he thought it would be a very brilliant stretch of fancy to suppose for a moment that Mr. Drudge could escape the necessity of furnishing his assistance, manual and bodily.

"Drudge, do you hear!" cried his sweet-tempered spouse, "go along with Moses and help him get the carriage out, this instant!"

Moses had left the room. "Moses!" shouted Mrs. Drudge, Moses!" "Here ma'am—here I be!" responded the youth, pushing a segment of his broad face over a corner of the lintel. "You may help Drudge a little while, Moses—only five minutes, be back here by that time. I want you to cut some 'sparagus to put in the front parlour, and a nosegay for the fire-place—I expect aunt and sister to tea, Moses!" she concluded bestowing a bland smile upon the heavy-headed juvenile.

Moses and Mr. Drudge thereupon departed, the latter muttering as he turned a corner of the house, a fervent prayer for the immediate demise and interment of the amiable lady whom he had just left. As they crossed the fields on their way to the scene of labour, Drudge was the first to open a conversation with his companion.

"Underhill," said he, "have you got the money by you for those muskrat skins?" "No, I havn't just now," replied the boy, "Fields told me if I'd come over to the tan-yard to-morrow, he'd settle with me."

"And what have you done with the bag of fresh feathers?"

"Them—why put them aboard the market wagon. I expect you'll have returns by next Tuesday, or the day arter," responded the youth, with a very intricate and complicated expression of

countenance which might have been construed to mean half a dozen things at once.

" I want that money very much," said Drudge, partly to himself and partly to his companion. " There's Quimby's bill on the P'int and John Merritt's account for clothing, ought to be paid the first time I go to Plumpitts."

" I think they ought, by all means," echoed master Moses Underhill, with the same ambi-dexter look.

They had now reached Blind-brook and discovered the family carriage up to its waist in the middle of the channel, the water dashing over its dark top like that of some huge black monster which was struggling for its life up the stream.

" Moses," said Drudge, after surveying it for a moment, " you'll have to strip and go in." " Catch me!" exclaimed master Moses retreating backwards up the bank, " If you say two words about that again, Drudge, I'll go home and tell missis, and then you'll catch it, I reckon!" Mr. Underhill accompanied this tender threat with a complacent grin, which had the singular effect of throwing old Drudge into a violent fever, which lasted some three minutes and a quarter.

" Well Moses," said he at last, finding the youth intractable, " I suppose I must do it myself, or else (lowering his voice) there'll be the devil out of the pit to pay up at the house!" Directing his companion to bring a coil of rope and a couple of lengths of rail, old Drudge stripped stark naked and plunged in.

The first discovery he made, was, that Blind-brook was some two feet deeper than he had imagined, and consequently over his head. His first movement after making this pleasant discovery was to grasp the limb of a tree which overhung the stream. This he succeeded in doing and sustained himself by it some five minutes, bawling all the time to Moe Underhill for help: and when at length, that charming youth came forward to his assistance, his zeal and eagerness to rescue Mr. Drudge was so overpowering, that he rushed headlong against the tree from which that gentleman was suspended, with such precipitancy as to shake Mr. Drudge directly into the water as if he had been a shrunken russetin-apple, in want of nothing but moisture. At the very moment when he fell, a heavy swell of the freshet came tumbling and raging down the brook, and striking Mr. Drudge obliquely over the shoulder, carried him under: he rose for a minute to the surface and threw

out his hands convulsively towards the outstretched limb, Mr Moses Underhill ran up and down the bank shouting to him to "dive for the coach!"—when a second billow heavier than the first rushed upon him and bore him from the sight. The injunction of Moe Underhill (in whatever spirit it was given) was not lost upon the ear of the submerged Drudge, for, aiming with considerable skill, he succeeded in permitting himself to be borne in at the carriage-door, which was swung open by the tide. Shortly after, a long, melancholy-looking head was put out at the top of the coach-door, and Moses discovered that old Drudge stood upon the back seat of the family carriage and was safe.

After waiting something like an hour until the swollen torrent had subsided, Old Drudge and his companion renewed their attempt, and with many struggles, by the aid of rope and crow-bar and bar-post, they succeeded in rolling the carriage upon the bank—the greater share of the labour falling of course (out of deference to his years) upon the patient Mr. Drudge.

In the course of a couple of hours more, the carriage was cleaned and partially dried, and stood before the door awaiting Mrs. Drudge's orders. The horses that were harnessed to it were a notable couple, being sorrel twins, having long ghastly necks, short tails and punchy bodies, with small mouths and mournful eyes; and to complete their character, lean and feeble, with a look of overwork and ill-usage.

"Drudge!" screamed the amiable female bearing that name, standing in the door and directing a withering glance towards Mr. Drudge, who was slowly shambling up the lane completely exhausted and toil-worn. "Drudge,—I want you to get in the carriage and go down to Plumpitts at once!"

"Oh yes!" said the poor man, meaning "oh no," a thousand times repeated with an emphasis.

"Get in immediately and I'll tell you what I want." Drudge mounted in, almost mechanically, under the talismanic influence of that inexorable voice. "And now turn the key, Moses: there—sit still now Drudge, and mind me!"

These words had been accompanied by the closing of the carriage-door, the insertion of an iron key in a lock attached to the same (which Mrs. Drudge had placed there, knowing old Drudge's propensity to indulge in potations and forget his errands when he visited the thirsty and drinking village of Plumpitts) and Mr.

Drudge's assuming a quiet, martyr-like demeanour, as if he had been put in jail and expected every minute to be brought out to instant execution.

"In the first place, Drudge, you'll get me a pound of Mr. Slimfink's best tea—best young hyson: try it yourself, Drudge, your a good judge of tea, Joel, though you don't get it but once a week!"

"Oh yes!" murmured Drudge, softly.

"You needn't get out there; Slimfink will bring a sample to the door, I gave him directions when I was there last about that. Next, Drudge, you'll go over to Wringold's shop and purchase two yards of his small spotted calico—just in. Mind Drudge—small spotted red calico—spots very small.

"Can't he get me a new jacket, missis, while he's there?" suggested Moe Underhill from the box seat, smiling pleasantly on his mistress.

"You deserve a jacket—don't you—you villiain, for minding me so well this morning, and coming back in just five minutes. You good for nothing, you ought to have the jacket you've got on well-trimmed, instead of a new one.—And Drudge, you can stop at Slimfink's as you come back, and buy me seven pound of Havanna sugar, and a quarter of starch; and, mark me, (raising her fist clenched in warlike fashion) don't you venture to leave the carriage 'till you've made every one of the purchases! Purchase by the sample, Drudge, and let 'em understand you pay in silver!"

The sorrel twins, now, after repeated admonitions from a whip in the hand of Mr. Moses Underhill, succeeded in getting themselves in motion. The carriage wheels had scarcely revolved more than twice or three times, before the voice of Mrs. Drudge was heard calling after them, and the person of Mrs. Drudge was seen in pursuit of the vehicle. Moe Underhill allowed her to enjoy a delightful little trot on the highway before he condescended to arrest his promising span. "Stop, Moses, stop, stop, stop!" cried Mrs. Drudge in an ascending musical voice. "Here's the key: you've forgotten the coach-door key!"

At length she overtook the fugitive vehicle and handed the key up to the youthful worthy on the driver's seat, "Do you hurry back Moses, to cut that asparagus and make that nosegay."

"Yes, missis, I'll make you a very nice nosegay when I come back—a very nice one," answered Mr. Underhill. Whether he ever lived to come back and make that nosegay is a matter about

which the reader's mind will be placed perfectly at rest by the sequel.

"Drudge!" cried his amiable spouse once more, conveying her little, sharp face and vicious gray eyes inside of the carriage window. "You may bring me a bunch of black-fish, if Tom Haddock has any fresh from the water: and don't you get out till you've brought the fish as you value your life;—and as for the starch—recollect—it's for my own personal collars, and not for yours—so you'll get first quality."

Hereupon Mrs. Drudge departed, Mr. Drudge fell back in his seat from the awful state of suspense in which he had listened to the last injunction of his charming lady, and the carriage trundled or crawled along the road.

They travelled on quietly at a moderate pace for the first mile and a half of the distance to Plumpitts, when suddenly, as they were turning a corner of the road and driving close by the side of a stone-wall, Moe Underhill was shot softly from the carriage-box over the fence and landed on his feet in the neighbouring field. Old Drudge was slumbering at the moment, but waking up a little while after and looking out at the window, he discovered a heavy-headed apparition bearing a marvellous general resemblance in outline and movement to Mr. Moses Underhill, scudding rapidly across the fields. It was, however, only the thought of a moment with Drudge—and as the sorrel twins made no such discovery, they journeyed forward at their old pace the same as if nothing had happened. At length they reached the brow of Plumpitts' hill, and feeling no restraining hand at the rein they scampered down the declivity in lively style, like a span of runaway spectres; and rushed into the village with the old family carriage clattering at their back, at such speed as to bring the best part of the population into the road, and the remainder to their doors and windows.

The horses being without guidance aimed for a public horse-trough, in the centre of the village, at which they had a chance of obtaining a few stray oat-grains, left there by more fortunate and better fed quadrupeds that came to water.

The eyes of every adult inhabitant of Plumpitts were levelled forthwith to the family carriage of Mrs. Drudge, which was well known in the village; and on the discovery of Mr. Drudge in one corner of the same, conversation like the following arose.

"Ah! ha!—there's Tishy's private prison again, and her poor, travelling jail-bird!" said an idle tailor, who had abandoned his shop-board and gathered with a group of men and women in front of the post-office.

"How old, Drudge is beginning to look!" rejoined the post-master's wife, with her hands under her apron. "Upon my word he looks ten years older than uncle Si Purdy—and he's sixty last Christmas, ten o' clock at night!"

"Enough to make a man look old, madam," said the tailor, who was a consequential little personage with a figurative turn of mind and a firm expression of mouth, "to be riding about like a lobster in a stew-pan with the lid on, in that horrid box of Tishy Drudge's. If I was Joel Drudge I'd kill her—yes! I'd maul her to death: I'd hold her up to the sun on a three-pronged pitchfork, and toast her to a cinder and go into a regular state-prison at once as an incendiary! I'd commit some dreadful crime—that would I—rather than be confined in that close crib. It breaks a man's spirits like pie crust, such a thing does! He can't work—he can't do anything—he can't pay his debts! it incapaci'ates him!"

The name of this tailor happened to be John Merritt, and the reader will, at a thought, discover the happy pertinency and deep feeling with which these remarks must have been delivered.

"Why," said Tom Haddock, the fisherman, who had paused with his wagon in front of the post-office, to join in the conversation, "he's just as silly in there—Old Drudge is—as a consumptive mackerel in my big fish-car. But where, in the name of the great Striped Bass that Bill Horley caught last week, where is Moe Underhill? I saw the carriage come rattlin' in, without pilot or helmsman, or a man at the sculls, as I was crossin' the P'int. 'There must be something the matter,' says I to Harry Shaddle, 'or, you may depend on it, the boy would have hold of the tiller!"

"You say truly, Thomas," said the tailor, "something must be the matter, or Moses Underhill *would* be in his place on the carriage seat. Joel Drudge couldn't have driven the horses down, sitting inside the vehicle, unless his neck was as long as a crane's and he had arms to match! Underhill is a wild youth and may have pitched himself headlong from the seat out of despair!"

"What the devil would he do that for?" asked Tom Haddock.

"Because his master can't pay his honest debts!" answered Mr. Merritt.

"That's more than likely," said a small, thin-shouldered old man, with a pair of smart, sparkling eyes that constantly gave the lie to the rest of his countenance, which was dull, heavy and devoid of meaning. "That's more than likely, for didn't Dolly Hiedlebrook's cat hang herself in a boot-jack, because her mistress got too poor to keep a cow?"

"Cats love cream, and Moses Underhill loves money, and I shouldn't be surpised if he had got off and drowned himself out of mere respectability," added Mr. Merritt. "It isn't respectable for a man to owe a tailor's bill."

"It isn't Mr. Merritt—by no means it isn't, and Tishy Drudge ought to be ashamed of herself for not keeping her husband in good clothes—and them paid for—her owning as she does—the Hum'stead—and ready monies out at interest too!" asserted the postmaster's lady, with an air of virtuous indignation.

"He shall pay mine, I know!" cried the little tailor, in as towering a passion as a little tailor can be supposed, by the liveliest stretch of imagination, capable of elevating himself to. "If it costs me all the thread and thimbles in my shop—and a year's beeswax too—I'll bring him up to the mark. John Merritt won't be trifled with any longer."

"You're right, Merritt," said the thin-shouldered man. "I wouldn't submit to it!"

"Merritt! Merritt! who are you talking to?" asked the little tailor, ferociously, looking down from the eminence to which the tempest of passion had whirled him. "My name is Mr. Merritt—Mr John Merritt!"

While this dialogue was passing, a new personage was approaching the grand centre of attraction—Mrs. Drudge's family carriage. This was a broad-built, heavy gentleman on horseback, with a marvellously well developed person, presenting about the same breadth of surface to the eye, from whatever point he might be viewed: whether from the north, the south, the east or the west. In a word, it was Harry Shaddle, the fat landlord of the tavern on the Point. He rode up to the window of the carriage and looking in, exclaimed, "What, Joel, in the old squirrel cage again!—Why arn't you out, and trotting down to the P'int to take a cup with us? eh! solitary confinement's dry work as the gad-fly thought when

he was corked in an ounce phial!" With this the portly landlord gave a hearty laugh, which shook not only his own wide domain of flesh but even reached the nag upon which he was riding, and nearly shook the little animal off his legs. This self-same laugh had made his fortune. "Where's Moe?"

"*Where* is the boy?" cried Drudge, after thrusting his head out of the carriage, and now, for the first time, investigating the driver's seat.

"I heard that you come in without a driver, Joel, or else the Old One was setting up there unsight, unseen—for your horses did come down the hill, as if they had the very devil at their heels!"

"I'm afraid the boy's thrown off and killed—my God! what will Tishy say?" exclaimed Drudge, elevating his hands and eyebrows and speaking from the very bottom of his ventricle. "I thought I saw him pitched from the seat, but it's like a dream."

"Oh, don't disturb yourself, my old boy, I don't believe Moe's dead—or like to be: he knows too much for that. But have you heard the news, Joel?"

"No—what news? nothing dreadful I hope."

"Nothing very dreadful: only Quimby's broke and blown up on the P'int, as I prophesied. I knew he couldn't last long again' the Old Stand with Harry Shaddle behind the counter—though a few of his friends flew off to the new perch—and you among the rest, Joel, I'm sorry to say!—Quimby's blown up like a smack with a pound of gunpowder in the hold, and a dropsical vagabond on deck: a limb of the poor devil is scattered here and a limb there. Here his rotten liver and lights; there, a decayed leg—and for his brains—the harbour-master may find them if he can and lay a duty on 'em!"

"He has made a sad time of it!"

"Yes; he's exploded entire, and made an assignment out and out; whereby he assigns and sets over to Smith Plevin—assignee, attorney and creditor in chief—five live topers, a row of broken-necked brandy bottles, an uncollected account against Joel Drudge, Esq., a pair of musty boots, two odd slippers, a tap-room without a customer and a fishing boat without a bottom!"

"Smith Plevin's the assignee, is he?" asked Drudge, with a pretty thorough knowledge of the character of that same Smith Plevin.

"Yes, Smith is the assignee—and devilish tight work he'll make

of some of you!—You'd better fight shy of Plumpitts, for he'll be sure to snap you up the first time he catches you in the county!"

With this friendly caution Harry Shaddle touched his whip to his horse—and rode off, sitting erect in his stirrups, and trying to make a spectacle of himself, as every fat man does, and—to the credit of their efforts be it spoken—they generally succeed! Old Drudge threw himself back into the carriage, and began to cogitate with all his power of mind (which was by no means unlimited) over Quimby's unsettled bill—and the fate of Moses Underhill—striving to devise some plan to pay the one and imagine what had become of the other, when he suddenly descried a man and a boy approaching by one of the cross roads that led into the village, and, at the same moment, two other men advancing on the other side, from the opposite extremity of the same road.

He soon discovered that the former were Mr. Smith Plevin, the Attorney, and Moe Underhill; and the latter, John Merritt, in company with a man whose person was unknown to Drudge.—Smith Plevin was a middle-sized man, with a hard livid countenance, without a drop of blood, and a low, bony forehead, made to look still more villanous by having his stiff black hair combed down over it.

"You are my prisoner!" said this personage, stepping up to the carriage with a heavy bundle of papers in his left hand, thrusting his right hand in at the coach window and grasping old Drudge rudely by the collar.

"You lie, sir, he's mine!" shouted a voice from the opposite side of the vehicle, and another hand was placed at the same instant upon the collar of Drudge's coat.

"Haul him out, law or no law!" cried a second voice from the same quarter. "Drag him out Mr. Skinnings—drag him out—like a weasel from an egg-basket!—he has owed *my* bill long enough, and I will have satisfaction, cost what it may."

At this peremptory direction, which proceded from Merritt the tailor, his companion gave Drudge a violent jerk, and attempted to pull his person through the window of the vehicle.

"Hold there Skinnings, or you'll get in trouble!" bawled Smith Plevin, "You've been breaking the man's close—*frangit clausum.* Stir an inch further and I'll bring an action for him myself! He's our prisoner!" and Mr. Smith Plevin twitched the body of old Drudge with great energy towards himself. "You're a *malefactor,*

a *plagiendo*, and d——d fool, Smith Plevin!" shouted Skinnings, "and you may take that as your counsel-fee in this case!" and he passed a pound weight of hard knuckles to the account of the small ribs of Attorney Plevin.

"See that Moses!" cried Plevin, with quivering lip and knees that quaked with apprehension. "An assault with intent to kill! Mark that Underhill! you're good evidence—over fourteen I believe, Moses? Understand the nature of an oath?"

"Yes, sir!" answered master Moses readily, "yes sir!"

"All right!" said the attorney, withdrawing his hold from Drudge's collar, "that's the second case I've picked up to-day. Now get your prisoner out if you can, Skinnings!"

In accordance with Plevin's ironical advice, Skinnings first tried the carriage-door: finding that impregnable, he next attempted to draw Drudge's body out at the carriage window, but after several strenuous trials he discovered that it was impossible to get more than the head of the terrified debtor through, and as his writ required and authorized him to take "his body," he was obliged to abandon the attempt. Meantime, Smith Plevin stood by, indulging in a sarcastic laugh, punching Moe Underhill with the end of his law-papers, and inviting him to observe "the smart practice of Sim Skinnings: the best lawyer in the county!" When Skinnings withdrew from the carriage, muttering "it wouldn't be safe to break the cursed old door!—let's see what this bright young attorney has got to do!" Plevin stepped forward with a complacent smirk on his countenance, and placing his hand upon the coach-door turned towards Moe Underhill, and, smiling, said "Moe, advance with your iron argument, in other words, bring the key. I think we'll introduce a document here that will effectually remove this stupid plea in bar!"

At this summons, Mr. Moe Underhill inserted his right hand in his right breeches' pocket: and it is singular what a wonderful effect that simple insertion produced on the whole expression of the boy's broad face; his lower jaw fell, his cheeks were monstrously elongated, and he, all at once, looked strikingly like a Shaker in a brown study.

His hands immediately and swiftly penetrated into every conceivable pocket about his person: he cross-questioned every nook and corner of his clothing, and subjected his hat and boots to a series of most searching interrogatories.

The universal and stunning return from every quarter, was an unmitigated *non inventus*; so that Master Moses Underhill had enjoyed a beautiful travel on foot of some half dozen miles in the bracing country air, over to —— ——, the capital of the county, and notified Smith Plevin that 'Now Old Drudge was to be caught out of his county'—all to no purpose. The horrid reflection crossed his mind that he might have lost the key in jumping from the carriage or in his scamper over the fields.

That this enterprising young gentleman might not be alone in his peculiar style of face, Mr. Plevin obligingly drew out his countenance to the requisite length, and stood opposite Moe Underhill with a responsive extent and sadness of feature. At this moment, to increase the joys of the worthy couple, Drudge suddenly assumed a scruple of courage and thrusting his red visage out of the coach familiarly charged Moe Underhill with being "a thief and a runaway!"

To which the boy familiarly returned "Hush your jaw you old victim! I'll have my pay out of you yet for the beatin' you guv me last Thanksgivin' day!"

That no single incident might be wanting to complete the overwhelming catastrophe Mr. Sim Skinnings, at this juncture, marched up to Mr. Smith Plevin and with a determined manner said "Sir, you were insolent just now!" And without further parley Mr. Skinnings commenced an active assault on the person of the aforesaid Mr. Plevin. Now Skinnings was a tall man with an immoveable face which looked as if it had been carved out of seasoned pine-timber or rather as if all his features had been tied up, very early in life, in a hard knot and he had found it impossible ever since to disentangle them. He therefore formed no very pleasant or playful belligerent and accordingly began to drub his little antagonist horribly at arms' length. Plevin who, although not framed exactly on the heroic model, had some sparks of manhood in him thought the game altogether too much on one side and hastily imagined that the bargain would be vastly improved by introducing a second party into it, plunged his head directly into the waistcoat of Mr. Skinnings, and commenced plying his arms up and down into the face of that eminent gentleman in a parallel line like the pistons of an engine: and Mr. Skinnings began to batter the dorsal possessions of Mr. Plevin with a high, long sweep of his arms after the manner of a smith's largest sledge-hammer.

Mr. Skinnings would have inevitably succeeded in breaking in sundry ribs of his antagonist, had it not been for a fortunate bill in chancery of a monstrous solidity and thickness, which was slumbering in the little lawyer's hind coat-pocket, and Plevin would have undoubtedly disfigured the face of Skinnings, had he not, in an early stage of the attempt, made his knuckles sore by knocking against the hard bronze thereof. While this professional battle was proceeding, and general attention was attracted to its progress, Drudge thought it afforded a good opportunity for him to attempt a release from his imprisonment. With this purpose he cautiously put his head out of one of the openings of the windows, and shrinking his body to its smallest dimensions, endeavoured to coax it through. He succeeded in passing it as far as his third rib by forcible struggles, and there for some time he hung, neither able to advance or recede, like a rash pickerel that has been caught in a net, and plunging into one of the meshes imagines it may glide through—fixed mid way its glassy eyes looking out upon a glorious prospect of escape, while its tail and the better part of its body quiver and wriggle with all the horror of confinement and fruitless toil! At length, by a sudden wrench, Old Drudge succeeded in restoring himself to his former locality on the back seat of the carriage—and there he sate shaking with the dampness of his prison—and shaking as if his only remaining chance of enfranchisement lay in bursting his prison to pieces by the violence of his tremors.

During all this time the combatants kept steadily at their business—growing more heated and furious every minute. Suddenly a cry of "fire! "fire!" was heard in the upper part of the village, and the village engine was seen rattling along the main street and bearing down directly upon the mob gathered about Plevin and Skinnings and, without a moment's delay it began playing, under the direction of Tom Haddock, upon the belligerent attornies. The thumping of the engine arms, the clamours of the mob and the shouts of the brawny fisherman alarmed the hitherto quiet sorrel twins of Mr. Drudge, and thinking, perhaps, they had tarried long enough in the disagreeable village of Plumpitts, they wheeled about and clattering past the mob, just in time for Old Drudge to receive a discharge of the engine pipe upon his person, they scampered off up Plumpitts' Hill on the road to the Homestead.

Through these various events the day had glided nearly to its close. Large, heavy shadows began to fall from the trees by the

road-side, and, crowding nearer together, and dilating more and more every moment as the sun rapidly declined, they darkened the track upon which the driverless horses were travelling. Now and then the shadow of a locust or wild-cherry tree that stood solitary in the centre of a field would blink in, like some monstrous goblin, at the window of the carriage and remind its occupant that night was swiftly approaching. A tree-toad or cricket would repeat the tidings in a doleful voice, and Old Drudge, trembling with the chillness of his prison and apprehension of some peril or other, chattered in reply.

They passed a swamp—and the wind came sighing and roaring through it like a mad devil, and a swollen stream rushed dismally through the tufts of dark grass and bog-weeds. Just as he had fairly passed this gloomy spot he heard a rattling noise upon the the roof of the coach, as if the branches of some overhanging tree were raking over it. He put out his head, timidly, to discover what it was—and received a violent stroke from some unseen object obliquely over the face. Thinking it might have been a straggling limb, as soon as he had recovered from the shock he thrust his face out of the opposite window. Again he received a stroke heavier than the first, and a gruff voice exclaimed "Now out of the other!" Poor Drudge, terrified and trembling and not daring to disregard the behest of the invisible, fearfully exhibited his head from the other window. A third blow which made his sconce ring again—and the voice bawled "Now the other!" He obeyed again —thwack! thwack! thwack! and a shower of violent blows rained about his ears and face until they brought blood. This game was kept up for a quarter of an hour—when the voice dismounted and thrusting into the carriage whispered grimly, "Moe Und'rill's compliments to Mrs. Tishy Drudge—and tell her she can roast you for Thanksgivin', as you've been pounded tender!" A smart succession of sharp, quick strokes lit upon the backs and flanks of the sorrel brethren, and they hurried away as if they thought Mrs. Drudge herself was at their heels.

This unusual speed soon brought them to the door of the Homestead, and in attempting to turn rapidly into the large gate that led to the corn-crib they overturned the disastrous and ill fated vehicle. At the point which they had selected for its overthrow, there was a huge, sharp-cornered rock, planted there to guard the gate posts, and the overturn was accompanied with a loud crash. The work

of the moment accomplished the grand purpose of the day; it shivered one of the carriage doors and left Old Drudge sprawling at the opening with one leg sticking out of the opposite window in mid air. The sudden display of a light at the door of the house startled the animals, which had stopped and stood stock-still when the catastrophe ocurred; they moved forward a few steps and Old Drudge was detected crawling forth.

Bruised, frightened and hungry as he was, he was glad to hobble up stairs and sneak supperless to bed, rather than encounter one of those domestic tempests which had so often rattled about his head and given him (although not an aged man) the aspect of a weather-beaten sea captain, and the familiar title of Old Drudge.

THE UNBURIED BONES

"Lost Beauty, I will die,
But I will thee recover."
Sir R. Fanshaw's QUERER POR SOLO QUERER.

ABOUT midway between Long Island Sound and the Hudson, there is a gloomy ravine called Dark Hollow, which ploughs, as it were, a broad and deep furrow between two high ridges of land. The Hollow itself is filled with sombre woods, and constitutes a sort of legendary womb of earth, in which tradition has for many years bred its monsters; supplying the neighbourhood with a brood of as lusty and good-for-nothing fables, as gossip could wish to chirp over at a winter's fireside. Among others there is the story of the spectre of the stranger that was drowned in the neighbouring pond (whose body was never discovered), walking this dim alley in his sleeves, with his yellow vest thrown open, with one short boot and one long one, and without a hat, just as he appeared before his fishing-boat was overturned—the very costume in which he went to the bottom.

Then there was the Yankee that hung himself on the great black walnut tree by the brook, with an empty cider-flask in his pocket, and whose ghost has so unquenchable a thirst that it has been heard any time the last twenty years, crying (in a thick voice and apparently half over seas) for "more cider!" and "another pull at the jug—only one more!" and to the thirsty propensities of which ghost, the owners of the land below the Hollow attribute the frequent dryness that afflicts the channel of the brook.

Then, on the side of the Hollow, and under the shelter of rugged and sturdy oaks, that clamber up in the dim light as if eager to breathe a purer air, lies nestling away from the observation of the keenest eye, Gaby's Hole; a mysterious nook, in which, the story goes, a gang of hardy counterfeiters, many years ago, established

a mint, and spouted forth from thence, as from a fountain, their streams of impure coinage.

It is said that ruffian forms are even now sometimes seen flitting about the mouth of the Hole, and that the glare of lawless fires lit up so long since, is in cloudy nights reflected against the sky. The noise of hammers, too, often mingles with the puffing of a huge bellows, and, combined, they startle the damp cricket from his low pallet on the earth, and the fire-bug from his light-house elevation in the mountain pine.

It was near this haunted region, and reclining in a slope of the opposite ridge, that Francis Whortle gazed into the Hollow. It was a summer's afternoon, and he had lingered on that particular spot, thus questioning the depths of the mysterious realm, he knew not why, for several hours.

There was something in his past history that might explain this brooding habit, which was wont to seize and bind him as with a spell by the side of running streams, in the twilight of thoughtful sunsets, or beneath the melancholy boughs of mighty trees.

Francis Whortle was a youth in the very prime and spring-time of life, and yet clouds came and passed across his brow as if it had been that of an aged man, or one on the remotest verge of suffering and care-stricken manhood. The story of his sorrow was simple enough,though with a touch of almost romantic singularity. He had loved a beautiful girl—and, as he thought, had won her affection in return; when, suddenly, and without any hint or token of such an event, she had vanished from the neighbourhood—vanished like a spirit, none could tell at what precise moment, from what spot, nor whither. Hope exhausted itself in hoping, and dreaming visions of her return, and Invention fell dead at the anxious feet of the bereaved man's friends—but she never more came back. At night a light form, beautiful with the hue and the grace of youth, stood often at his bedside, and smiled upon him with a delicate finger on its dewy lips—and vanished silent and smoothly as the air. Spring came, the bright season of expectation and promise, and still she tarried. Summer perished in the deep-green woods and was buried beneath the Autumn leaves, yet the lost one was not found. Thus time chased hour on hour, and the skies smiled and threatened, and after long lingering, the swallow and the pigeon returned from their strange absence far away, but the sweet girl came not in their track, returned not to haunt her own familiar dwelling nor

to build her bower under the calm old eaves of her childhood's home. From the hour of that sad disappearance, Whortle had yielded himself to an unseen influence which led him about from place to place, as in a dream. From that moment he had rambled hither and thither, through wood and field, and placing himself on some chosen spot, with the soft meadow-brook's murmur in his ear, or the gentle sound of waving branches, he would strain forward with an eager gaze and anxious look, as if he awaited the sudden presence of the vanished Creature from earth or air.

So busy was his brain with the image of the lost one, so nimble and restless his fancy in forging comfort for his poor, lone heart, that every object in nature at times assumed the fairy shape and seemed to walk forth from amid surrounding things, palpable to the eye, fresh and lovely as in the moment before she had gone for ever. That young man's single grief brought back for a time all the fair 'humanities of old religion,' and often in the deep wood he started at a gentle form gliding swiftly, like a dryad, before his view; or gazed wildly on a sweet face smiling responsive to his own from the untroubled fountain, a nymph-like countenance, perishing with the first breath of the gazer. It had become his sole employment to people all the fields, and meadows, and margins, and woodland glades with the spiritual likeness of his vanished mistress.

With this hope warm at his heart he peered earnestly into the deepening shadows of the Hollow. In a few moments an airy and graceful shape sprang, as if from the covert of a wild vine; it was the accustomed gentle form; it turned its face upon the lover; it smiled—and—as the young man lives—it beckons him from his lofty seat. He doubts—it pauses—a sorrowful look darkens its fair countenance—again it smiles and renews the token. This time he will not doubt nor waver. He gains his feet, and with unusual speed hurries after the fair apparition. Within a few paces of her, however, he slackens his steps, and follows in awe and wonder. Straight through the Counterfeiters' dark defile she takes her way, without hindrance from stone, bush, or tree: following, as he may, he pursues her till she winds through a clump of tall, gloomy trees, and steps out upon an open space. He has stumbled but once, and that was a little way back, upon a rusted spade, standing against the remains of an old forge or rural fire-place. The gentle apparition crosses the glade; she reaches a white ob-

ject that stands out boldly against the dark earth, and turning once more upon him with a sad smile, she melts, like a dew or a snow-flake, into the earth. For a moment he pauses like one who has seen some strange object in sleep; but quickly surmounting fear and wonder, he hastens to the spot where the visionary Creature was lost to his gaze, with a high hope beating at his heart, and rising up and looking out at his gleaming and eager eyes. He discovered a mouldering heap of bones, and as his eye wandered about here and there, they fell upon something that glimmered in the grass: a quick, faint splendour, as of some lightning-bug or cricket trailing about his little lantern from one blade or one green hillock to another. But it shone too steadily for their transitory light, and as his thoughts were fixed upon it as if it had been the lurking eye of a serpent, he stooped and took it in his hand. It was a plain gold ring, soiled slightly by the weather, and with the inscription "*Ruth Greenleaf.*" Holding the relic in his hand, he stood like one lost in reverie, gazing by turns on it and on the mouldering bones at his feet.

Where he had found the ring the fragment of an arm-bone lay, but the hand to which it had belonged was crumbled and gone. He now felt that he was standing by the mortal remains of the fair creature who had disappeared so long ago, and borne with her his heart into the deep forest. It too had mouldered like the bones before him; though it had a living tomb, his own breast. The apparition had guided him kindly to this spot to fulfil a sweet and sacred duty: the burial of these fair, white relics. How she had perished there, in that strange, lone place, he could not guess; whether by swift stroke of lightning, by serpent's poison tooth, by the sharp pointed pain of sudden malady, or by a deadly hand. The last seemed probable, and he thought at once that she had been murthered by the ruffian counterfeiters, upon whose guilty labour she may have come in some one of her girlish rambles through the gloomy Hollow. They had slain her lest she should disclose their hiding-place, and had fled. The disordered condition in which he had observed Gaby's Hole, as he passed rapidly through it, strengthened and justified this dim conjecture. But though she had lain long in the chill air, while the green trees were looking down upon her and shaking their green glories in vain as a shroud over her, the hour of her sepulture had come. Kneeling at the foot of the relics, and breathing forth a brief prayer, Whortle stepped back a little,

and returned with the rusty spade in his hand. Selecting a spot on which the sunlight fell in the pleasant hours of the day, and where no gloomy nor ill-boding tree cast its shadow, he struck his spade into the mould. As he delved the earth, many thoughts swelled into his heart and moistened his eyes.

Here have you lain and crumbled, thought he, while I have lived framing idle fables, dreaming over the vainly past, and questioning the future. The soft spring-shower descends, and the wild-rose takes off its infant mask in the meadow, and discloses its blushing face to the sun and air, but in vain have those gentle drops fallen on you, pale, passionless relics. The Winds and the Elements have swept the earth and the air and the waters quickening all things into life; but you, even the loud thunder has passed by, and left dull, slumbrous and motionless as ever. Here the fresh dawn has poured its ray, and kindled voices and harmonies without number in the breast of this wild wood; silent, mournful and dismantled it has found and left you, once the glorious residence of speech and music. Shrunken from a fair and fruit-like beauty, where all eyes once dwelt, you have rested here —visited by all things in nature—the wind, the sunbeam, the shower and the evening glory, unknown, honourless and unadored. With emotions and fancies like these he shaped the grave.

Simple as was the whole scene, it was a subject for the painter's finest pencil—for it was tinged with many colours of the true sublime. A spade, a youth and a few crumbling bones. What is there in these to awaken deep feeling or reverential thought? It is a spiritual picture in the midst of busy life. On the high ridge they are gathered with the setting sun streaming full upon them, while on one side husbandmen, joyous with the spirit of plenty, are turning their winrows; on another, nearer by, on the margin of the pond, a boisterous group are dragging their well-laden fish-net ashore, blessing Fortune and the favouring tide. Beyond the Hollow, up on the by-road that passes through the woods, a country school is just let loose, and Childhood tumbles with its satchel and sportive face into the open air, and looks up laughingly to the clear sky. And there into that neat farm-house, with its newly-painted front, a troop of weddeners is hastening.

On Whortle delves, and the grave is finished. Gently he lays the relics in its bosom, and ere he casts back the damp earth on

its kindred earth, he stands, leaning on his simple companion in the labour, and gazes long and earnestly down into the hollow mould.

He has buried the Hallowed Bones, and planted an evergreen at their head, and as the mellow light of the dying day streams through the trees, borrowing a new hue, to add to its thousand colours, from them, he turns his steps mournfully away, as if he had laid his own heart there with his mistress's dust.

PARSON HUCKINS'S FIRST APPEARANCE.

At the close of a day in the early part of autumn, a small-built gentleman in a black suit and snowy neckerchief was sitting in the desk of Chatham Chapel, with his head resting upon his folded hands. From the tall side windows, the purple shadows of evening fell upon his person, and thronged about his elevated place of repose, as if they would bury him entirely from the gaze. The whole vast body of the building began to be filled with darkness and gloom, and the different objects—the pews—the galleries and aisles, were blended together, and assumed whatever shapes the fancy chose to give them. The black-clad gentleman, the sole tenant of this realm of shadows and confusion, was the Rev. John Huckins, a righteous man of God, who was born with the happiest possession that one who intends to make piety the business of his life can fall heir to, and that was an indescribably meek and evangelical length of feature. He was, at the present time, the clergyman of a Christian congregation that worshipped in the Chapel, and at the particular moment when he is introduced to the reader, was reposing after the fatigues of the afternoon Wednesday service, and at the same time awaiting the attendance of a few professors on a prayer meeting, which was to be held there preparatory to an evening discourse. In the slumber which he was enjoying, images of past scenes—of times long by-gone—vanished away, far away in the dim regions of youth, mingled with the events and things and creatures of yesterday, and at length he dreamed that the very Chapel in which he was seated was touched by the strange magic of sleep, and was passing through one of those wild and wizard changes which occur only in dreams. He beheld before him two beings, with something mortal in their garments and bearing, mixed with more that was unearthly and spectral in their look and the tones of their voice.

One was short and round-shouldered, with a long-waisted round-about on, and the other a pale, meagre figure, with sweat upon his brow, which seemed as if it might be the death-damp, which he had neglected to wipe away in his hurried emergence into light They both busied themselves in unhinging the pew-doors, and, with huge piles of them upon their shoulders—far greater it seemed than mere mortals could stagger under—they tottered down the aisles, and disappearing at the preacher's feet, returned in a few minutes empty-handed, and bore away a second load. While they were engaged in this singular task, they now and then interchanged a word with each other.

"What do we have to-night?" asked the round-shouldered man.

"The 'Devil's Due Bill,'" answered his companion.

"What! 'The Devil's Due Bill Honoured'—in which Old Roberts is so capital in Wiggle?"

"The same, the very same!" returned the meagre figure, "and I thank Heaven we've got possession again. It was a shame to let these canting dogs bark so long in Old Chatham; and I could not lay easy in my grave till I helped get up another good old piece in her walls!"

"You're right, Bill—prompter snuff me out, if you ain't!" assented the round-shouldered personage. "I wonder if they'll all be here to-night?"

"The whole company, in full force, you may depend upon it, and we'll go through in less time than we ever did before—music and all, take my word for it."

When they had completely disposed of the doors, they commenced sacking the pews themselves, and carried off the red and brown cushions, muttering, "Bare benches is good enough for the half-price bottoms of the pit!" After this they swept the hymn books, testaments, &c., which they found on the pew shelves, into a green baize, and hurried them away with the same eagerness, grumbling forth something or other about the "saints in the play-house!"

While these two personages were engaged in this way, as many as half-a-dozen sallow-looking men were perched about the floor of the building, on ladders, with painters' jackets on, and employed in swiftly executing miniature scenes from Shakspeare and other dramatists, on the naked panel-work of the galleries. In the meanwhile, hammers were plying in every quarter of the house;

nails were drawn and driven, parts of the building taken down and parts renewed, with all the dexterity and despatch of jugglery. Presently, all the artisans disappeared, whither, no one could guess; and Huckins, astonished at what he saw, and every moment expecting some greater wonder, now discovered men and women in gay dresses, laughing and full of frolic, entering the first gallery, while instead of the humble believers and penitents whom he had expected to detect creeping up the aisle to prayer meeting, whole hosts of robust sinners, and boisterous boys and 'prentices poured in upon the floor of the house, and took possession of the seats directly before his face. In a moment more he heard the faint tinkling of a bell, and turning round, discovered an immense curtain, with the picture of a huge woman, with flowing robes and a yellow crown on her head, rolling gradually towards the ceiling; and now for the first time, as he took a seat among the spectators, the conviction entered his mind that he was in Chatham Theatre, a wild, wicked boy, yet with some germs of childish innocence and purity blossoming about his heart, and not the hard, hypocritical man, seemingly holy and pure in outward act, while all within was barrenness, guile and a dull, gloomy heathendom. The first scene that opened upon the audience, exhibited what seemed to be the committee-room of a church, in which were assembled some seven or eight men, transacting business connected with their office of Trustees or Deacons. In dress and demeanour, they resembled men with whom Huckins was familiar, although their size and lineaments in some respects were different. The prominent personage of the group was a turtle-shaped middle-sized man, with a brown wig and wrinkled countenance, expressive of a dogmatical temper and sturdy self-will.

"It shall be so!" cried this magnate, striding up and down the stage, and flourishing a heavy walking stick. "I have made up my mind to that point, gentlemen. He has the genuine evangelical spirit, I am confident, and that's enough for me."

"And for me!" added a second committee man. "He's not a bad speaker too, for I sat beneath the back gallery, and heard distinctly every word that he uttered."

"I stationed myself behind a post," said a third, "and took the exact guage of his voice. It is a high tenor, and suits an oblong, low-roofed building like ours exactly. He has my vote."

"The spirit is all that is needed," joined a fourth, "the pious, Bible spirit. This is arms, legs and voice to a godly preacher."

"You are right, my friends," resumed the first speaker, smiling complacently upon his supporters, "very right, and if he had a a voice as rough as the Rocky Mountains—"

"But consider, Mr. Huff," interposed a tall, lantern-faced man, "we have learned from his confidential servant, Wiggle, that he writes his sermons in an overcoat, with his hat on, and a small bundle always packed up and lying on his table. He isn't in the missionary service and liable to be summoned away to Burampooter or Burmah at a moment's notice, and what do all these travelling preparations mean? Eh?"

"Genius!" answered Mr. Huff, peremptorily. "Genius and the Holy Ghost! Look what a face he has, too. Why the exhibition of that face alone at the gate of Heaven would obtain his instant admission. It's the face of a cherub, Higgs!"

"As Higgs, my senior partner, says," began a timid little man, who was rather short of wind, and, consequently, always cut short in his attempted observation, as in the present case. "Wiggle, his confidential—"

"Vexation take Wiggle!" cried Mr. Huff. "Gentlemen, shall we put it to vote? Are you ready?" In a few minutes, after the circulation of a respectable black beaver hat amongst the members of the Committee, the Rev. John Huckins was announced as duly elected pastor of the ——— Church.

The previous astonishment and wonder of the parson was not a little increased at beholding his own election thus passing before his eyes, very much in the same manner as it must have passed in private, when he was a candidate before these self-same gentlemen, who were thus mysteriously presented to him in the full possession of their official functions.

The scene now shifted, and in the place of the deacons in their committee-room, Huckins beheld the parlour of a respectable private dwelling in which were assembled about twenty females, of all ages, old, young, and many in the middle period of life.

"What a powerful discourse!" exclaimed one of them, a large woman, with an ugly expression of countenance.

"So earnest, too!" said a young lady. "Brother George counted the strokes of his arm upon the cushion, and thinks he rose a hundred in the course of his sermon: besides the two prayers. He is a divine preacher!"

"This fiery zeal of his will keep us busy furnishing pulpit covers it is true," said an aged female, "but the Lord be blessed! my eyesight continues good, and my right hand hath not yet forgot its cunning: I can be serviceable to the Church even in my old age in this matter. Smite the sinner like a strong man, and we'll supply the red damask, or plush of good quality, as long as the Lord continues our brother in the ministry."

"I propose," said the large lady, "that we make the Reverend John Huckins a life member of the 'Pottawottomy Society,' and that a committee be named to wait upon the distinguished gentleman to notify him of his election, and request him to deliver a series of discourses, on the importance of clothing juvenile Indians in slops and dickies, in aid of the funds of the Pottawatomy Association!" This motion was unanimously carried, and the large lady was named as said committee. Much further general conversation occurred, followed by a scriptural banquet of hot rolls and preserves, and the "Society" dispersed to their respective residences.

To his utter astonishment, the next scene represented a room, in every respect corresponding with his own study; and to his great horror, he felt himself suddenly lifted from his seat in the pit, and by some unseen agency placed by the side of a small table upon the stage and fronting the gaze of an immense audience. In a moment after his abrupt metempsychosis from the pit, a little man in a buff complexion and buff-coloured pantaloons to match, a bob-tailed coat and skull-cap, with a brown loaf under one arm and a bowl in his hand, entered, with a comic salutation to the audience and an irresistible grin on his visnomy, and was greeted on his appearance, as if he were a favourite performer. It was Roberts, Old Roberts, the droll and comedian of Old Chatham Theatre, and Huckins at once recognized in him one of the actors whom he had seen on that same stage many long years ago when a boy. The character which this quaint performer at present personated, was that of the confidential servant of the Rev. John Huckins, over whom he seems to have possessed a singular mastery, which he had an equally singular mode of exhibiting.

"Well, Wiggle," said Huckins, constrained by some mysterious influence to take part in the play that was, or seemed to be, performing: "Salary, three thousand—house-rent free, besides an open account with every member of the congregation. That's a handsome business!"

"Rather handsome, I should say!" replied Wiggle. "Summ'at better than looking through a noose, like a starved steer through an ox-yoke: in this fashion." And running a rapid noose in his pocket-handkerchief, he threw it over the head of the Reverend gentleman, and drew it up till his face reddened like an autumnal sunset, while the audience encouraged the manœuvre by the most clamorous applause. "There," continued Wiggle, loosening his halter, "I'll let you off this time, but mind, I'm to have twenty per cent and marriage fees!"

"I thought," returned Huckins, "it was to be the naked twenty per cent. Nothing was said about the fees before."

"Oh, the fees—I must have the fees, or do you see," said Wiggle, knocking the parson's broad-brimmed hat over his eyes, "you'll be furnished with a night-cap that admits no waking, and when its drawn on you go to sleep for good and all."

"Well, well," said the parson, "take your own way, but be careful and not a word about the—"

"A—r—"

"Hush," said Huckins, "don't breathe the word in this hemisphere, or we're done for!"

"You must pay me the fees too," continued the remorseless Wiggle, "as you receive them. They're generally paid in gold, and there's a premium you know. D'ye understand?"

And to awaken Mr. Huckins to a lively perception of what he meant, he punched him playfully in different parts of the person, and concluded by placing his hand gathered like a trumpet at his ear, and uttering, in a portentous whisper, the word "Arson!"

Now whether the terror and paleness which invariably afflicted Huckins at the mention of this dissyllable arose from the retrospect and reminiscence of some past conflagration in which he had participated, or from his looking forward, with prophetic eye, to the "great burning," in which he might, perhaps, reasonably expect to participate more deeply, it would not be wise, to conjecture at this early stage in the story.

"Do you think there's the slightest—the faintest chance of detection?" gasped Huckins.

"None at all, not as much as would convict a grasshopper of wearing pumps, I warrant you, if you'll only keep your face stretched out to the right length. Do you practice as I told you?"

"Yes—twice a day."

"Mornin' and evenin' I suppose, before a glass. You'd better stretch it in a boot-jack than let it dry and shrink up—for you'd look like the very devil if it wasn't for that smooth face of yours, Jack."

"You haven't said anything of the overcoat and so forth—have you?" asked Huckins.

"Only hinted a little of it to Higgs, one of the committee—who was rather unfavourable to your election—thinking it might give him an idea of what a great preacher you was, and what wonderful talent you had to write your sermons in a box-coat!"

"Be careful, Wiggle—for Higgs is a sharp, keen man, and already suspects something: and it's safest to be ready for travel at short notice, isn't it?"

"By all means. Be prudent, and we'll feather our nests and fill our pockets out of these innocents yet. Preach staunch sermons—strong flavour of brimstone—make long prayers and loud ones, and live on vegetables in public—and our fortunes are made!"

"Ay, ay," said the parson, "don't fear me; and hark, Wiggle, be particularly careful not to have anything to say to that fellow Morfit. I believe he knew me when I was here before."

"What, the lean affidavit-maker?—I wouldn't speak to the starveling, if we two were on a desert island famishing—if he had a broiled woodcock in his hand, basted in its own drippings, and would divide it for the asking."

Here the facetious Wiggle slipped his scull-cap into his coat pocket, perched the bowl upon the crown of his head, took a huge mouthful from the brown loaf under his right arm, lifted his coat-tails in a playful manner towards the audience with his left, and amid a tempest of huzzas and shouts of "Old Roberts forever!" made his exit. The tall woman with her flowing robes and yellow crown, gradually emerged from the canvass as the curtain fell, and parson Huckins seated, he could not tell where, in the confusion of his dream, heard the free comments of the audience on what had passed.

"He's a desperate villain," said a young man in a pea-jacket, crushing a play-bill in his hand as he spoke. "But Wiggle's too much for him!"

"I've seen many just such weasel-faced fellows as this parson!" said a dry, little old man, "and I wouldn't trust one of 'em with my finger parings."

"What do you think will become of Huckins?" asked a sharp-

nosed man, with eyes that projected like a lobster's; leaning forward into the face of the dry old man.

"Why, he'll be hung," answered the little old man, emphatically, "or turn politician, which will amount to the same thing in the end!"

"I think he'll marry the old lady of the Pottawotomy Association," suggested the young gentleman in the pea-jacket.

"We shall see!" said the old man:—the bell tinkled—the curtain rose, and exhibited the same scene as the last, with Huckins at the small table, and Mr. Huff seated opposite.

"If it could be made out scripturally, it would afford me great satisfaction," said Mr. Huff.

"It can be, sir, I assure you; I shall be able to show beyond doubt or controversy, that every human being now on the face of the earth must suffer the flames except my humble self, and the majority of the Deacons of —— Church; in which number, Mr. Thomas Huff, I am happy to say, holds no mean position."

"Thank you, sir, thank you; but have you sufficient texts and apposite passages?"

"Ample, my good sir, ample," answered parson Huckins. "Excerpts and quotations from Isaiah and the Revelations, as long and heavy as the weaver's beam, wherewith Golias went forth against the children of Israel."

"Really," continued the pharasaical little Mr. Huff, rubbing his hands and clucking quietly like a hen. "Really, this will be the happiest event of my life since my election as deacon. What a pleasant time WE will have in Heaven, brother Huckins! a little select company of saints, feeding on the pleasant pastures of the skies like the remnant of a countless flock of ewes and sheep, scattered hither and thither by a storm; while hundreds of thousands of poor wretches will be groaning and burning and crying out in Tophet: provided you get them there scripturally."

"It shall be done, sir!" said Huckins, confidently.

"Mark me, I deny the doctrine—though I must confess it looks reasonable—unless you support it stoutly by texts and bandages of Holy Writ!"

"Fear not," again answered the parson, "I will bring the Bible to bear directly upon the point, as if it had been shot from the mouth of a cannon: and many will be the poor sinner that would like to come under our blanket, when the tempest and lightning

and bombs and hand-grenades of Almighty wrath are falling about his ears!"

"We are safe?" asked Mr. Huff, with an anxious wrinkle on his brow. "You are sure of that?"

"Beyond peradventure—as secure from hell as if we were insured in a Fire Company," answered parson Huckins, somewhat profanely, but it was in a dream, and perhaps the poor man knew not what he spake. Anyhow the two grave and pious gentlemen here sate quiet about the space of a minute, casting their eyes toward the roof, and indulging in inward laughter, which at length overflowed and ran out at their eyes and over their faces like tears.

After this the parson produced a Bible and a map of the world: and proceeded to illustrate his views.

"This," said he, pointing out one text, "this carries off all the Heathen—all these lands around which I have drawn a black line: African, Patagonian, Indian, Bedouin Arab, dwarf Laplander—and the whole brood. This," selecting a second, "despatches the Catholic countries—marked red in the map—and this undoubted passage," taking a third, "deals the fire upon Protestant Europe and Botany Bay."

"Botany Bay!" exclaimed Huff in astonishment.

"Yes—there's a special clause for New South Wales in this text. Nothing else could be intended. As for America, there's no need of scriptural denunciation, for we know from our own eyes' testimony that it deserves no less. The state of moral destitution in this country, Mr. Huff, is absolutely awful! Sodom and Gomorrah!—Sodom and Gomorrah!"

"Will the town of Greenwich, Connecticut, be saved, think you?" asked Huff.

"Not a soul, from the town clerk to the county judge!" answered the parson, who knew that said town of Greenwich was Huff's birth-place, and that he had been handled rather severely there by the County Court, in a little affair of apportioning money from his pocket for the support of a hedge-born child."

"Thank God!" thereupon cried the deacon, when Huckins had uttered this verdict, and showed him where he had entirely blotted out the irreligious borough with a huge ink spot.

"I feel grateful to you, parson Huckins, for these comforting doctrines," said Huff, taking the parson warmly by the hand. "Continue steadfast in preaching and upholding them—and that

matter of the increase of salary ?—you understand." And with this broken suggestion he departed.

The curtain dropped, and the next scene discovered Mr. Higgs, solus, striding up and down the stage, apparently labouring under high excitement.

"This is not to be borne," said he. "Here comes a fellow the Lord knows whence, and exhibits a furlong of feature one day over the pulpit top, and consigns the whole audience peremptorily to the pit as if they were a basket of spoiled salmon, and the next day, as the Lord liveth, he is chosen pastor of the congregation. Why I would rather hear a fire-bell ring in midsummer than his voice: his tones are those of a radish-girl, and his gestures the contortions of a rheumatic sailor undergoing the bastinado. I hate such fellows worse than a stone mason hates a rat about his foundations. He deals his brimstone about as freely as if the whole audience were infected with the bilious fever, or were a parcel of scoundrel dogs with the distemper. He seems to have constituted himself a sort of eternal watchman to cry in the great burning. His discourse is stuck full of pitch and cinders, and one could not be reasonably surprised to see him spit flame. But somehow he hath obtained strange mastery over Huff (a credulous, ignorant old man, who believes everything he hears, and a self-willed one who strives to impose his novel discoveries on every one he meets) and other of our people. The Pottawotomy Association is again in motion—and Heaven knows what absurdity these cackling old women will give birth to!"

Mr. Higgs now made his exit, and the next scene displayed a cobbler's stall, in which a long, lean man was seated on a bench at work, and standing by his side our old friend, Wiggle.

"So you find this a profitable business," said Wiggle, "this affidavit making ?"

"It helps a little in hard times," answered the cobbler. "I can turn off at the rate of three affidavits and two pair of boots a week, and that pays pretty well."

"But, Mr. Morfit, I should think there would be no limit to the amount of business you might drive in the former line. If I understand it, all you have to do is to sign your name and kiss the book."

"Ah! you know very little of the profession," said Morfit, with a sigh; "I have found, from considerable experience, that I can't

stand more than one affidavit a day. I tried for a little while after I commenced, but I found the oaths lay heavy on my conscience at night, and I put it on regimen, one a day."

"Who are your chief employers, Mr. Morfit?"

"The quack doctors: I supply them with sworn certificates. A politician now and then engages me just before an election; and I occasionally go into court, in important cases, to help out the evidence."

"What are your terms? So much a folio, or such a per centage on the profits?"

"I see, Mr. Wiggle, you are entirely ignorant of this branch of business," said Morfit, with a ghastly grin. "A gentleman wants something in my line, he comes in, 'Morfit,' says he, 'an affidavit on the virtues of the 'Buffalo Embrocation,' and a pair of light boots, both ready by Saturday.' Very well, say I. 'In Court,' says an attorney—I have an extensive acquaintance among attorneys—'In court, Morfit, Saturday morning, case of Borrowe vs. Bustard, action of libel, swear bad character for Bustard—and two pair of best made French slippers for plaintiff.'"

"Well," said Wiggle, "when will you have this affidavit of mine done, about Huckins?"

"Let me see, this is Wednesday; two certificates for Dr. Spike, that his pills are valuable in clarifying cider—swear to two barrels cleared of sediment by a single box; affidavit for the politician that Quirks, opposition candidate, knocked his cartman in the head with cart-rung, and destroyed four square inches of skull, because said cartman refused to vote his employer's ticket!—This is a busy week, Wiggle, just before the fall election, but as you're an old friend, I'll have this of yours for you to-morrow noon."

"Do you understand what its contents are to be?"

"That deponent was acquainted with said Huckins in Massachusetts, while he was studying theology; knew him to be pious, correct in deportment, highly esteemed, &c."

"That's it, Morfit," said Wiggle; "it's only to satisfy the private scruples of one of the deacons, who says he never heard of Huckins before. To-morrow noon."

"True as a heel-tap!" answered the cobbler. "What's the number of the parson's dwelling."

"Oh, I'll call for it," said Wiggle; "but our number's — —— street."

"Very Good. Good day, Wiggle."

"Good day—to your honour!" and Wiggle departed, with an entirely original grin, which drew his whole countenance into a single wrinkle, by some mysterious motion of the muscles, in the same manner as an old lady's work bag is drawn into a snug ball of black silk, by aid of the string.

The audience encored; he returned and renewed the wonderful face, again departed—the scene shifts—and enter the ugly old lady of the "Pottawotomy Association," and Mr. Higgins.

"As I was saying, Mr. Higgins," said the old lady, "I am to wait upon parson Huckins to-morrow, and notify him of his life-membership in the Pottawotomy; and solicit him to deliver a course of lectures, or a single lecture, on the present indelicate style of Indian dress, and the propriety of substituting trowsers and body-coats in its stead. You will accompany me, will you, Mr. Higgins?"

"Higgs, my senior partner says—" proceeded Mr. Higgins.

"Oh, yes, I understand," interposed the old lady. "If the medal was ready, we might call upon him to-day. Whether to present it to him standing or kneeling—"

"I should think," again said the unfortunate Higgins, who seemed destined to never finish a sentence, "As Higgs—"

"Or with my hat on or off," continued the old lady, not heeding her companion; "in my new calico or my cloth habit? I *must* consult the Society: I never would have undertaken this task if I had known how many difficulties and perplexities would attend it. Anyhow we must elect parson Huckins a member of our 'Short-stitch and Long-stitch Benevolent Union:' and then I shall resign!"

"Mrs. Furbelowe!" exclaimed Higgins.

"He's a sweet man—a pious sweet man. I could almost worship him—Oh, Huckins, it's too good for my soul!"

"Mrs. Furbelowe!" again cried Higgins, "at what hour—"

"To-morrow noon—to-morrow noon!" exclaimed Mrs. Furbelowe, waving him away; "meet me at the parson's—sweet parson Huckins!"

The act curtain fell, and as the music (which had a wild, unearthly tone in that building, where it had been so long silent) played it's full tide of melody upon the audience from its airy tubes,

the groundling critics again indulged in strictures on the performance.

"The marriage will surely come on in the last act!" said the young man in the pea-jacket. "Mrs. Furbelowe sighs like a broken-winded bellows, and means to trap the parson."

"There'll be a riot yet," said the sharp-nosed man with the lobster eyes, "don't you think there will?"

"No such thing!" answered the dry, little old man. "Huckins will be made a bishop or secretary of state before the play's done. Wiggle wasn't as good in this act."

"He'll brighten up in the next?" timidly suggested the young man in the pea-jacket.

"He will!" answered the dry, little old man sententiously.

A shrill whistle was heard, the bell tinkled, the curtain rose and disclosed the worthy Mr. Morfit in an open street, eagerly eyeing a respectable two-story house, with the name of "John Huckins" on a broad silver door-plate.

"This is the house," said the affidavit maker, "and I must get a sight of the Reverend gentleman—so as to know his person if I should be confronted with him. That must be him," casting his eye down the street, towards a person approaching in that direction—"black suit of broadcloth: auburn hair (making entries in a note-book); a slow, cautious gait; limps a little; about the middle height—now for his face—long-featured, pious—Good Heavens! it's my old friend—hush! I won't mention it in the street, or we'll have a hanging on the nearest lamp-post—Ho! here comes Wiggle, too—I must tell him some lie about my being here, though I needn't swear to it. How are you, Wiggle?"

"Ah, my man of oaths and French slippers, my pink of swearing and sole leather—how are you—and what are you doing in this quarter of the town?" said Wiggle, striking the open palm of his broad hand upon his back like the fluke of a Norwegian sperm whale of the largest class.

"Merely looking out for a few subjects for affidavits," answered Morfit. "Two of the aldermen opposed to our party live in those two double houses."

"Well, what can you swear of them?" asked Wiggle; "that they are four feet about the girth, and split the seams of their coats open with fat, like a full peas-cod in the month of August?"

"No—but one of them has purple embossed paper in his fan lights—and the other a span of high-headed light bay horses."

"Suppose you could swear one of them kept a stud of wild tigers, and had a polar bear for a coachman—would it help you any?"

"To be sure. I'd give any amount of money if I could swear to that effect—without being set down by the whole city for as great a liar as the town clock!"

"How so—my worthy fellow?"

"Why, you see," responded Morfit, with a sly leer, "Quadrupeds and villains is intimately connected: if a man rides on horseback he's a rogue—in a one-horsed vehicle he's a scamp, and if he ventures in a coach or barouche of his own—God save us—he's a desperate rascal. Let him trudge on foot and wear out sole-leather—and—Heaven bless him! he's an honest man—that's our creed!"

"Well, I must in, in spite of your wonderful new discovery in ethics," said Wiggle, working his eyeballs with his thumbs so as to impress Morfit with the conviction that it was all true—namely, in his eye. "We're to have grand times at our house this morning. Two of the Trustees is to call—the Botherwhatamy Society presents a pewter dining set to the parson—and I'm to serve up a basket of the 'pure juice of the grape!'—Good day, Morfit—another time—happy to see you—good day—good day!"

And he glided in at the hall door, with both hands extended, as if in the act of swimming out of reach of further dialogue with the affidavit maker.

"Well," said Morfit, when left alone, "I may as well disappear too—and I'm afraid I shall be obliged to adulterate your 'pure juice' with a few drops of that unpleasant elixir called—justice. Here's for the police." Stretching his neck like some meagre bird of prey, bringing his coat close together and knocking his hat over his brows, he put off at full speed down the street.

In a few minutes the stage was occupied by the ugly old lady of the Pottawotomy Association, who came in puffing and blowing, and looking like Vesuvius on the eve of an eruption, with Higgins running at her side.

"A sultry day, Mr. Higgins," said she, pausing and unfurling a white pocket handkerchief, wherewith she wiped her picturesque face. "A very sultry day—be careful, or that medal will melt—see that it's snug in the basket if you please, Mr. Higgins."

"Yes, Ma'am," answered the little gentleman, uttering the first sentence that he had been allowed to finish since his appearance in the performance.

"I wish I had thought to pack it in ice!" said Mrs. Furbelowe, looking wise, "it would be so cooling and grateful to John's hands."

"What John?" gasped Higgins in amazement. "What John are you speaking—"

"Oh, the parson—I meant the parson," answered the old lady, blushing slightly, "I was too scriptural that was all. In the New Testament the apostles and disciples are so familiar—it's really a picture to the mind, Mr. Higgins. I wish Mr. Huckins would allow me to call him John. It would be delightful, wouldn't it?"

Before Higgins could furnish an answer, they were within parson Huckins's hall and the door had closed.

In a moment or two more, the two deacons, Messrs. Huff and Higgs, were discovered passing through the street in the same direction.

"What think you of our new parson, now?" said Huff, with a smile on his wrinkled visage.

"Worse and worse," answered Higgs; "I have not seen the certificates he promised yet, and from the violent language of condemnation that he uses in the pulpit towards others, I doubt, more and more, his own Christian character. Anyhow, I should like to have some evidence of it."

"You are on your road to it," said Huff. "If certain proofs that he is to lay before me are not sufficient, you must be in truth hard of belief. Strong, overwhelming gospel proofs!"

"Some such I need," said Higgs, firmly, "and nothing less will serve my purpose. Christian churches, Mr. Huff, are getting too much in the habit of selecting their pastors as showmen choose their lions, for the loudness of their roar, or, like jugglers, for the quantity of false fire they can spit from their lips."

"Ah!" interposed Huff. "There you are, brother Higgs, on your old heresy. You were always in favour of packing away Christians cooly and comfortably, and despatching them from this world as if the journey to Heaven were no more than a pleasant excursion by water to a country town in September. But nothing in my mind can supply the Lord's household with purified and holy occu-

pants but fire—fire—fire : the beginning, the middle and the end of Scripture."

"Why men, Mr. Huff, are surely something more than mere vessels of potter's clay, whose bad qualities are to be burned out by the flame."

"Never mind, come in, come in, and your scruples will melt the moment Parson Huckins opens his mouth," said Huff; and at that moment they were ushered into the same building that had received Mrs. Furbelowe and her companion.

The next scene disclosed the parlour of parson Huckins's dwelling, with the parson, the two deacons, Mrs. Furbelowe, of the Pottawotomy Association, and Mr. Higgins assembled therein.

"Well, how stands our case?" said Mr. Huff.

"All as I told you," answered Huckins.

"Our brother Higgs's condition is desperate—is it?" asked Huff, with a sweet sardonical smile.

"What's that you say of me?" roared Higgs. "Pray what is it, Mr. Huckins?"

"I'd rather not," answered the parson, "I have too much regard for your feelings."

"Out with it, sir, if you please," again cried Higgs; "I must know what matter concerns me that you and Mr. Huff are so secret with. Will you be so good as to inform me?"

"If you will know, then," answered Huckins, prefacing his remarks with a long-drawn and meek expression of countenance, "it is my unpleasant duty to inform you that it is your inevitable destiny to go to hell!"

"To go where?" exclaimed Higgs, in an incipient rage.

"Be not agitated, my good sir!" said the parson soothingly, "I merely said to hell. Be calm—for my sake—be calm. I regret it—I sincerely regret it, and wish to alleviate your misfortune as much as possible. Is there anything I can do for you in a secular sense : are you in want of meat? clothing? coal? I truly commiserate with you, my fellow-mortal!"

"No more of this, if you please," cried Higgs; "I will look at your certificates."

"Here, sir, is one—which must satisfy you fully," said the parson, and he handed him Morfit's document, with which Higgs immediately busied himself.

Mrs. Furbelowe took advantage of the pause to gain her feet,

and advanced within a yard of the parson, with a very solemn smile on her countenance, and the basket on her left arm; she there stopped short and began to hold forth. "Sir," said she, "the 'Pottawotomy Association' highly appreciating your numerous Christian virtues—"

"How is this," broke out Higgs, remorselessly cutting short the proffered harangue. "This affidavit is sworn to by my own shoemaker!"

At that moment and before the parson could reply to this pertinent query, Morfit himself entered with a little, grim man with a staff.

"Ah!" cried the little, grim man, the instant his eye fell upon the reverend gentleman, "Ah, my good old friend!—how are you, Peter—how are you?" he continued, grasping the parson's reluct ant hand, and wringing it with a hard gripe.

"Gentlemen," he added, seizing Huckins by the collar and turning to the company, "allow me to introduce you to my worthy friend—Peter Williams—the notorious incendiary!"

"Peter Williams!" gasped Huff. "Fire and flames!"

"A house burner!" said Higgs. "I thought as much from the combustible character of his sermons!"

"Take me home!" shouted Mrs. Furbelowe, "I'm fainting. I shan't survive this long! it's too much for my constitution!" And she let fall the basket from which the Pottawotomy medal rolled upon the floor. Wiggle availed himself of the confusion to slip from the room, with a most voluminous and expressive grin on his queer features.

"As Higgs, my senior partner, says—" proceeded Higgins.

"Come," said the officer, interrupting him, "come, Peter, you must go to prison. You'll die yet like an old horse at the rack, with your head through a halter."

"If I do," cried the parson, "I'll be—" He struck his hand forcibly upon the desk frame, to give emphasis to his asseveration: the shock awakened him. The whole scene had vanished, and instead of the pit audience, his eyes rested upon the up-turned faces of two or three humble Christians on the front benches of the Chapel, gazing upon him with dilating eyes. He convulsively grasped his hat, rushed madly up the middle aisle, out of the building—and, like all heroes of this humbler kind of romance, has never been seen or heard of since.

THE END.

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